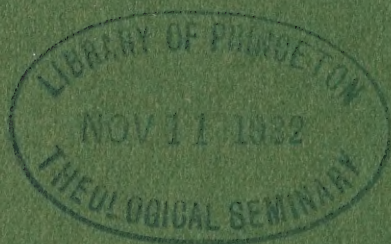


BEYOND CITY LIMITS

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BEYOND CITY LIMITS

A STUDY OF THE RELATION OF
THE CHURCH TO RURAL LIFE

By

✓
THE REV. F. D. GOODWIN

Secretary for Rural Work in the Episcopal Church



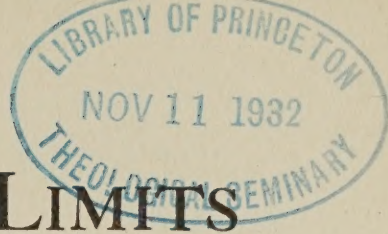
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THE NATIONAL COUNCIL

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NEW YORK

1926



Where the patient oxen were, by the ass's stall,
Watching my Lord's manger knelt the waking cattle
all;

'Twas a little country maid vigil by Him kept—
All among the country things my good Lord slept.
Fair was Rome the city on that early Christmas morn,
Yet among the country-folk was my Lord born!

Country-lads that followed Him, blithe they were and
kind,

It was only city folk were hard to Him and blind:
Ay, He told of lilies, and of grain and grass that
grew,
Fair things of the Summer fields my good Lord knew,
By the hedgerows' flowering there He laid His head—
It was in the country that my Lord was bred.

When the cross weighed down on Him, on the griev-
ous road,

'Twas a kindly country man raised my good Lord's
load;

Peasant-girls of Galilee, folk of Nazareth
These were fain to follow Him down the ways of
death—

Yea, beyond a city wall, underneath the sky,
Out in open country did my good Lord die.

When He rose to Heaven on that white Ascension day
Last from open country did my good Lord pass away;
Rows of golden seraphim watched where He should
dwell,

Yet it was the country-folk had my Lord's farewell:
Out above the flowered hill, from the mossy grass,
Up from open country did my good Lord pass.

—MARGERET WIDDEMER.

JESUS CHRIST was a man of the country-side. The greater part of His life was spent in a small town. His intimate friends were men and women of villages, of the fields and lakes and mountains. It was to a shepherd, a vine, a sower, a harvester, that he likened Himself.

The unconscious beauty of flowers, the carefree birds, the sunshine of clear skies and the impartial rain—these were the familiar thoughts on which He drew to illustrate His teaching.

And in His very Body, The Church, He lives on earth today. Surely His desire still is toward His people of the open spaces, and just because they see themselves neglected while the Church dwells in cities, they are perhaps excusable for failing to recognize Him. Not until the whole Church sees and fulfills her duty toward the rural life of the Nation, can she be the means of the establishment of the Kingdom of God among us.

It is my firm conviction that no aspect of missionary endeavor today has a greater or more urgent appeal than this: to carry the Gospel message of more abundant life into every isolated community of this wide land. It is with profound gratitude and abundant hope that I commend this book to the thoughtful attention of Church people.

John G. Murray
Presiding Bishop.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

THE interest and assistance of many persons have gone into the preparation of this book. Material which is the result of years of study by those who are experts in the various problems of the life of rural America has been freely used.

This is especially true of Chapters II and III. Much of the material for Chapter II was taken from *Our Templed Hills* by R. A. Felton. In the preparation of Chapter III, nothing less than wholesale robbery has been committed upon a series of articles on the Country Church, by Dr. C. J. Galpin of The U. S. Department of Agriculture, published in *The Country Gentlemen*; and on the Town and Country Church in the United States, by Dr. H. N. Morse and E. deS. Brunner of the Institute of Social and Religious Research. Ideas, sentences and whole paragraphs have been bodily transplanted, not, however, without the permission of their originators. Whatever information or excellencies this chapter may possess, must be credited to these gentlemen. Mistakes that may be found or imagined therein are our own.

The last two chapters are composed of articles by persons whose names appear therewith. Mention should be made of the assistance rendered by Miss M. G. Lacey of the Library of the Department of Agriculture at Washington. Appreciation should also be expressed for the help of certain persons whose articles appear herein anonymously.

For the fine help of all of these persons, grateful acknowledgment is made by the author.

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CHAPTER I

THE FUNDAMENTAL VALUE OF RURAL LIFE

THE problem of rural life in America is a complex one. It deals with the economic, social, and religious needs of over 50,000,000 persons. There is no short statement that can present the situation; no easy formula that can solve it.

Obviously, since the rural problem is a problem of human lives and the relationships resulting therefrom, no part of it can be understood apart from its connection with the whole. The economics of the situation are bound up with certain social considerations; these, in turn, wait for their inspiration and development upon such agencies as the rural home, school, and church. But rural homes and schools and churches can best perform their task when the communities in which they are placed are economically prosperous. Thus the interdependence of all of these human factors makes a clear understanding of any one of them dependent upon some conception of the whole situation.

Now, in the problem of American rural life, one among many factors is rural religion and the rural church. And in studying rural religion and the rural church, we find the Episcopal Church to be but one among many agencies involved. The reader will understand, therefore, that this book may be well half through, before we come to consider the specific opportunity and problem of the Episcopal Church in the rural community.

First, the problem as a whole; then its religious aspect; then our Church's part.

RURAL LIFE AS THE BASIS OF NATIONAL LIFE

This is an assumption that is as old as any civilization which has advanced beyond the pastoral stage. History bears witness to its truth; the newer social developments of the twentieth century have not disproved it. As one writer expresses it: "Agriculture is not only an occupation which some individuals follow for profit; it is a great national interest determining, in a dominant way, the fortunes of the nation and the opportunities and character of the population."* The words on the seal of the United States' Department of Agriculture bear witness to our Government's faith in the basic nature of this industry: "Agriculture is the foundation of manufacture and commerce."

EXAMPLES FROM HISTORY

We must not think that this was a new discovery, or one peculiar to a land of such wonderful agricultural opportunities as North America. Let us look, for a moment, at the testimony of leaders of other times and nations.

"Civilization and agriculture are indissolubly linked together. It was by means of the gradual development of an agricultural mode of life that primitive man was able to arrive at a degree of social permanency. The tremendous significance of this transition from a wandering existence, deeply impressed racial tradition, and led the thinking of antiquity to ascribe to agriculture

*Dr. J. W. Robertson, *Report of Commission on Conservation of Canada*.

a divine origin. Brahma in Hindustan, Isis in Egypt, Demeter in Greece, and Ceres in Italy, were credited with the founding of agriculture.”*

Homer pictures the quiet satisfaction in the heart of the king as he views the ploughmen at their essential task: “Among them the king was standing in silence with his staff, rejoicing in his heart.”

Sociologists trace the development of a nation through these economic stages: finding, hunting, hunting and hoe-culture, pastoral, agricultural, industrial, and commercial. The period of their greatest stability is the agricultural stage. To and from this, as a climax, the others mount and fall away. They do not, of course, always realize this. During the eras of industrial success and commercial expansion, prosperity seems so evident, and the future is still unknown. But a glance back into history discloses a warning of serious portent.

As early as Homeric times, Greece had attained a considerable agricultural development. Stock-raising, crop-production, and dairying were indulged in. For the most part free peasants were the land owners. The king described by Homer, had a right to his thrill of pleasurable satisfaction as he noticed these things. After the eighth century B.C. changes began to occur: wars, emigration, and industry, changed the basis of Greek economic life. City life, with large industrial and commercial interests, became dominant. Because of the failure to work out a just and wise system of land tenure, many of those who were formerly free peasants became slaves tilling the estates of capitalists; while others, who found the struggle in the country too

*E. R. Groves, *The Rural Mind and Social Welfare*.

hard, flocked to the cities. Thus the national life of Greece was undermined by wholesale exploitation of the farming population. (See J. M. Gillette, *Rural Sociology*, Chap. III.)

In Italy, under Roman rule, the story was not greatly different. Roman farmers, in the early days, knew and practised an extensive system of farming. As in Greece, most of these were free peasants, owning and tilling their land. But gradually the same economic causes as had wrought toward the downfall of Greece, began to bring about a change. Militarism, conquest, slave-ownership, the consolidation of small farmers, absentee land-ownership, and the growth of cities, with the ruthless exploitation of the agricultural classes generally, broke down agriculture and ruined the small farmers. Many flocked to the cities to swell the parasitic masses there. "Without a large body of independent and self-respecting farmers, and with her city populations demoralized by idleness, vice, and luxury, Rome was in a position to fall a prey to the more vigorous invaders of the north."*

That the importance of agriculture is not associated with the lives of ancient nations merely, is shown by the testimony of that destroyer and builder of empires, Napoleon. In war he found that "an army travels on its stomach." In peace he declared, "Agriculture is the basis of the strength and prosperity of the Nation."

In the United States, from the beginning, this truth has been known to her leaders. Washington, in his last address to Congress in 1796 said: "It will not be doubted that, with reference either to individual or national welfare, agriculture is of primary importance.

*J. M. Gillett, *loc. cit.*

In proportion as nations advance in population and other circumstances of maturity, this truth becomes more apparent, and renders the cultivation of the soil more and more an object of patronage."

In 1910, Theodore Roosevelt, with the advantage of over a century and a quarter of our national development to judge from, wrote: "If there is one lesson taught by history, it is that the permanent greatness of any State must ultimately depend more upon the character of its country population than upon anything else. No growth of cities, no growth of wealth, can make up for a loss in either the number or the character of the farming population. In the United States more than in almost any other country we should realize this and should prize our country population. When this Nation began its independent existence, it was as a Nation of farmers. The towns were small, and were for the most part, mere sea-coast trading and fishing ports. The chief industry of the country was agriculture, and the ordinary citizen was in some way connected with it. In every great crisis of the past a peculiar dependence has had to be placed upon the farming population; and this dependence has hitherto been justified. But it cannot be justified in the future if agriculture is permitted to sink in the scale as compared with other employments. We can not afford to lose that preëminently typical American, the farmer who owns his own farm."*

AGRICULTURE (FOOD) AND THE WORLD WAR

That American agriculture would still justify itself in a time of national crisis, and increase its food

*From a speech delivered at Lansing, Mich., May 31st, 1907.

production to meet unusual demands, was fully shown in the World War.

"We are assured that never before in the history of war did the food-question play so large a part. This was true both because of the large areas cut off from production by the drafting of farm laborers into the armies, and also because of the difficulties of transportation of food stuffs. Undoubtedly, there was a time during the closing years of the war when a large part of the world was on the verge of starvation because of the shortage of supplies. In this emergency our people, both in the matter of food production and food conservation, rose to the occasion."*

In some respects the food situation in Germany was better than in that of other European belligerents; for Germany had, in the four decades before the War, kept before her the ideal of agricultural self-sufficiency. From 1887 to 1913, the population of Germany increased from 48,000,000 to 66,000,000, or 38 percent while the supply of vegetable foods and other staples, such as wheat, potatoes, and sugar increased from 44 percent to 114 percent. At the beginning of the War, Germany was producing nearly all the grain, potatoes, and sugar consumed in the country. If her production of meat-products had equalled that of her grain and vegetable foods, no doubt her economic self-sufficiency would have been even greater. But in the end, the greater resources of the Allies, in which the agricultural production of America formed so important a part, brought victory to them. The ruthless logic of economics had again moved to its usual conclusion. (See

*David Kinley, *Effect of the Great War upon Agriculture in the United States and Great Britain*. Editor's preface.

Readings in the Economics of War, Chap. XXIX, by W. H. Hamilton.)

Whether or not new methods of warfare will, in the event of future conflicts, have become so deadly and quickly destructive as to shorten the time of such conflicts so that old laws of economic resources will no longer be real factors, we do not, of course, know. Whether or not the newer ideals and instruments for international peace will become entirely effective, we can not tell, however much we may hope so.

But for the purpose of our argument, and for the emphasis of the theme of this chapter the fact stands out, that, in the World War, one great factor in bringing victory to the Allies was that the agricultural people and resources of this Nation did not fail in the great strain that was put upon them.

INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS OF AGRICULTURE

Recognizing the international importance that agriculture assumed during the World War, we can understand how, in times of peace, it may come to play a greater and greater part in the intercourse between nation and nation. In 1915, only 3 percent of the population of Great Britain was engaged in farming. It is easily seen that, if it were not for the fact that she has the agricultural resources of her Dominions to rely upon, the international aspects of agriculture and food-supply would become the most important problem in her national life. Other European nations whose imports of foodstuffs far exceed their exports, face a similar situation.

Favored as we are in the United States, our great concern in this matter is to find a foreign market for

our surplus products. If that market be not found, we are less prosperous, but no one goes hungry. With an importing instead of an exporting nation, the matter becomes one, not of added prosperity, but of existence. And as the populations of the Nations increase, the situation becomes, of course, more and more acute. Agriculture is no longer a local affair of the farmer going to market to barter a few eggs, or grain, or pigs with his neighbors and local store-keepers. It is becoming an international business.

But it is not alone as an economic matter that agriculture has an international aspect. Farmers not only raise foodstuffs, but they think and desire and plan in terms that are common the world over. The farmers of the world, the workers in this basic industry, living close to nature—these farmers and their families form the largest like-minded group in the world. Of the billion and a half persons on the globe, two-thirds of them live on the land. Thus far in the progress of human society, clan, tribal, and national organizations have successively been the limits beyond which no group could adequately develop their clan consciousness and activities. Even labor, as effectively as it has been organized within a nation, has not yet been able to set up an international union. But if, as seems to be the case, we are coming to the time when nationalism will count less and less, it is as well to remember that the farming people of the world form, potentially, the most powerful class on this globe.

The possibility of such a class development as this may seem too far remote to merit our serious attention. But someone has to look far ahead. Why not the Church? To have rural America Christian in such a

contingency, might go far towards shaping matters more as God would have them.

Our Lord certainly thought and acted in terms of world-wideness: "The field is the world," "Go ye into all the world." It will lend dignity, and one may hope it will also add momentum and point direction, to the efforts of our Church to meet more seriously the rural problem of America, if we think of the work, not only in terms of helping a little mission or bettering a small community, but rather as a contribution to a development, of age-long and world-wide significance. We must conceive of our rural task as one that shall have a part in guiding vast social forces toward the bringing in of God's Kingdom on earth.

"The rural problem will never be conceived in narrow terms by the well-trained student. It will never be confined within the limits of nationality. When social psychology can analyze the elements common to all country people as a result of their environmental experience, then we shall have a basis for international rural policies. Rural statesmanship will come under the momentum of a world viewpoint."*

"The rural problem is a world question. . . . It is a fact of no small importance that there are a billion people on the earth who live under essentially rural conditions; in fact, who are farmers. Their importance as suppliers of food, as conservers of soil fertility, as creators of civilization, as participators in the democratic movement—all this is beyond cavil. . . . I insist that the hour has struck for an international country-life movement."†

*E. R. Groves, *The Rural Mind and Social Welfare*.

†H. L. Butterfield, President American Country Life Association and President Michigan State Agricultural College, in *Rural America*, Jan. 1926.

THE CULTURAL VALUE OF FARM LIFE

We must guard against thinking of agriculture merely as a means of food production. It has as much to contribute to the mind and character of the nation as to its stomach. As one writer expresses it: "Agriculture is more than an industry. It is a way of life. The farm and the farm home are inseparable. Merchants and manufacturers do not live at their places of business; neither do their employees live at their places of employment. The architect does not dwell in his temple, nor the engineer on his bridge. But the farmer's work is centered at his home."*

So agriculture becomes a problem involving great human values. It is a manner of life that demands a twenty-four-hour a day service.

And because of this, there is danger of too great an absorption of one's mind and spirit in the business of plowing and sowing and harvesting. Long ago the writer of Ecclesiasticus uttered his complaint: "How can he get wisdom that holdeth the plow, and that glorifieth in the good that driveth oxen, and is occupied in their labors, and whose talk is of bullocks? He giveth his mind to make furrows; and is diligent to give the kine fodder."

Such is the danger, but not the necessity. For to those whose eyes are not so holden that they cannot see, and whose ears not so dull that they cannot hear, Nature speaks "a various language"—of beauty, of instruction, of peace, such as no other field of man's endeavor surpasses.

*Llewellyn Mac Garr, *The Rural Community*.

Perhaps a few quotations will remind us of the honorableness and cultural value of this ancient profession:

"All this I relate to you to show that quite high and mighty people find it hard to hold aloof from agriculture, devotion to which art would seem to be thrice blest, combining as it does a certain sense of luxury with the satisfaction of an improved estate, and such a training of physical energies as shall fit a man to play a free man's part. . . . I hold that there is no better employment for a gentleman than this which permits the soul leisure to satisfy the claims of friendship and civic duty." (Socrates.)

"Now in the course of nature the art of agriculture is prior, and next come those arts which extract the products of the earth, mining and the like. Agriculture ranks first because of its justice; for it does not take anything away from men, either with their consent as do retail trading and the mercenary arts, or against their will as do the warlike arts. Further, agriculture is natural; for by nature all derive their sustenance from their mother, and so men derive it from the earth. In addition to this it conduces greatly to bravery; for it does not make men's bodies unserviceable, as do the illiberal arts, but it renders them able to lead an open-air life and to work hard; furthermore, it makes them adventurous against the foe, for husbandmen are the only citizens whose property lies outside the fortification." (Aristotle.)

"It is not knowledge nor want of knowledge on the part of farmers that causes one to thrive while another is needy. . . . For the land never plays tricks, but reveals frankly and truthfully what she can and

what she cannot do. I think that just because she conceals nothing from our knowledge and understanding, the land is the surest tester of good and bad men. For the slothful cannot plead ignorance, as in other arts; land, as all men know, responds to good treatment. Husbandry is the clear accuser of the recreant soul." (Xenophon.)

Varro, in his third book on agricultural matters, writes: "Farming is not only the most ancient, but the best of all professions; for divine nature made the country, but man's skill the town."

Centuries later, Abraham Cowley, in his political works, frankly expresses his estimate of the advantages of the rural life as against others:

"Happy the man who from ambition freed,
A little field and little garden feed;
The field does frugal nature's wants supply,
The garden furnishes for luxury.
What farther specious clogs of life remain
He leaves for fools to seek, and knaves to gain."

Then finally, this appraisal of the cultural and character-building possibilities of farming by a modern writer:

"We have overlooked or disregarded the culture obtainable directly from agriculture. . . . The hope of a wholesome American life lies in the prospect that our farmers may come not only to the full appreciation and discharge of their duty as producers, but also to the realization of the full possibilities of personal culture which farming should afford. The burden of our teaching hitherto and the aim of most government activity in the farmer's behalf has been to show him how to produce more bushels and tons per acre. He

does not wish now to be shown how he can live on twenty-five cents a day so much as to be shown how his income will enable him to live as well as he ought. He wants more of the joy of living. . . . Culture is the product of thoughtfulness, the understanding of facts, the appreciation of the truth. . . . If the farmer of today is not living up to the cultural possibilities inherent in his calling, it is because he is deaf and blind to spiritual invitations that solicit him to the mastery of forces that have produced the miracles and the wisdom of the ages. . . . He who holds the plow may yet look off and look up. His mind may be busy with the conquest of the world.”*

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AND THE REPORT OF THE COMMISSION ON COUNTRY LIFE

As a practical and forceful summary of the whole idea presented in this chapter, nothing better has been written than the letter of President Roosevelt to the Commission on Country Life appointed by him in 1908 to study rural life in this country. He writes, in part as follows:

“No nation has ever achieved permanent greatness unless this greatness was based on the well-being of the great farmer class, the men who live on the soil; for it is upon their welfare, material and moral, that the welfare of the rest of the nation ultimately rests. In the United States, disregarding certain sections and taking the nation as a whole, I believe it to be true that the farmers in general are better off today (1908) than they ever were before. We Americans are making

*F. W. Howe, *Culture and Agriculture*.

great progress in the development of our agricultural resources. But it is equally true that the social and economic institutions of the open country are not keeping pace with the development of the nation as a whole. The farmer is, as a rule, better off than his forbears; but his increase in well-being has not kept pace with that of the country as a whole. A physician, who is also a careful student of farm life in the South, writing to me recently about the enormous percentage of preventable deaths of children due to the unsanitary conditions of Southern farms, said: 'Personally, from the health point of view, I would prefer to see my own daughter, nine years old, at work in a cotton mill, than have her live as a tenant on the average Southern tenant one-horse farm!' This apparently extreme statement is based upon actual life among both classes of people.

"I doubt if any other nation can bear comparison with our own in the amount of attention given by the government, both federal and state, to agricultural matters. But practically the whole of this effort has hitherto been directed toward increasing the production of crops. Our attention has been concentrated almost exclusively on getting better farming. In the beginning, this was unquestionably the right thing to do. The farmer must, first of all, grow good crops in order to support himself and his family. But when this has been secured, the effort for better farming should cease to stand alone and should be accompanied by the effort for better business and better living on the farm. It is at least as important that the farmer should get the largest possible return in money, comfort, and social advantages from the crops he grows, as that he should

get the largest possible return in crops from the land he farms. Agriculture is not the whole country life. The great rural interests are human interests, and good crops are of little value to the farmer unless they open the door to a good kind of life on the farm.

"It is especially important that whatever will serve to prepare country children for life on the farm, and whatever will brighten home life in the country and make it richer and more attractive for the mothers, wives, and daughters of farmers, should be done promptly, thoroughly, and gladly. There is no more important person, measured in influence upon the life of the nation, than the farmer's wife; no more important home than the country home; and it is of national importance to do the best we can for both.

"The farmers have hitherto had less than their full share of public attention along the lines of business and social life. There is too much belief among all our people that the prizes of life lie away from the farm. I am, therefore, anxious to bring before the people of the United States the question of securing better business and better living on the farm, whether by co-operation between farmers' buying, selling, and borrowing; by promoting social advantages and opportunities in the country; or by any other legitimate means that will help to make country life more gainful, more attractive and fuller of opportunities, pleasures, and rewards for the men, women and children of the farms."

That the convictions of Mr. Roosevelt were borne out by the studies of the Commission, the following extract from their report will show:

"The underlying problem of country life is to develop and maintain on our farms a civilization in full harmony with the best American ideals. To build up and retain this civilization means, first of all, that the business of agriculture must be made to yield a reasonable return to those who follow it intelligently; and life on the farm must be made permanently satisfying to intelligent, progressive people. The work before us, therefore, is nothing more or less than the gradual rebuilding of a new agriculture and a new rural life. We regard it as absolutely essential that this great general work should be understood by all the people.

"The forces and institutions that make for morality and spiritual ideals among rural people must be energized. We miss the heart of the problem if we neglect to foster personal character and neighborhood righteousness. The best way to preserve ideals for private conduct and public life is to build up the institutions of religion. The church has great power of leadership. The whole people should understand that it is vitally important to stand behind the rural church and to help it to become a great power in developing concrete country-life ideals. It is especially important that the country church recognize that it has a social responsibility to the entire community as well as a religious responsibility to its own group of people."

THE CHRISTIAN INTERPRETATION

It will never do to approach this subject solely from the economic or social point of view; or to interpret it in the light of history, as if things that had been must always be; or as if old causes, reappearing, cannot be controlled to produce happier effects.

It is not in Christian philosophy to believe that individuals or nations are in the grip of ungovernable powers. Rather, we are conscious of being co-workers with God, whose Spirit is as freshly creative today as ever.

Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, Greece, Rome and every other nation in the world's history, may have passed through the successive stages of hunting, pastoral, agricultural, industrial, and commercial life, developing to that unfortunate condition "where wealth accumulates and men decay," and then going down before the freshness of less civilized invaders. It does not follow, however, that America must develop in the same way unless we sit supinely by and fail, through ignorance or laziness, to use the creative power which God has given us in helping this Nation to use her strength for higher ends than self-aggrandizement.

It is a great venture for the Christian people of the United States to try, under God's direction and with His help, to save our Nation from the dangers which threaten her life from within and without. No one has even suggested any other plan by which we might be saved, except that one which Christianity offers. It is a great venture, but a worthwhile one. We may accept the record of history as our warning, but not as our doom.

CHAPTER II

THE NEW RURAL LIFE IN AMERICA

THE BASIC IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE IN AMERICA

IT may serve to drive home the thesis of the preceding chapter, and to make clear the present status of agriculture in the United States, if we give these concrete facts, furnished by the late Secretary of Agriculture. (H. C. Wallace, *Our Debt and Duty to the Farmer*, Chap. II.)

Farmers and their families make up about 30 per cent of our population.* They exceed in number any other group engaged in one general industry.

During the latter half of the last century, the development of transportation and markets, and the invention of and use of labor-saving machinery, made possible the rapid opening up of vast areas of fertile land. This resulted in the most remarkable national development the world has ever seen. A great surplus of raw materials and cheap foods was produced, which resulted in the rapid expansion of our industrial life. Our great superstructure of industry, transportation, and commerce was built upon the foundation of agriculture, and can stand without injury only so long as the foundation is secure.

According to the 1920 census the value of all farm property in the United States was almost \$78,000,000,000. The capital invested in all manufacturing industries was about \$45,000,000,000. The annual value of

*Note that the U. S. Census divides the population into two general classes, "urban" and "rural," using towns of 2,500, as the dividing line. Under this division about 50 percent are rural, and 50 percent urban. Not all rural people live on farms, by any means.

the dairy and poultry products of the farms of the United States exceeds the value of automobile manufactures.

England and France would have been defeated in the World War but for the enormous food supplies furnished by the farmers of the United States. Farmer families furnished 28 percent of the soldiers in our army in the war. In physical fitness, the farm boys were found to be superior. The General Staff reports that 100,000 country boys furnished 4,790 more soldiers than an equal number of city boys.

The future of the cities of the United States seems inevitably to lie in the quality of blood sent them from the farm. Since the native-born in the cities are not producing enough children to maintain themselves, they are being replaced by the children of foreign-born parents and the children of the farms. One-third of the farm children are delivered to the city at maturity after the country school and the country church have trained them.

THE NEW RURAL LIFE

Most of the people who use this book will probably be city folks. No doubt from books they have read, from plays they have seen, and from their occasional contacts with country life, as in summer vacations, they have formed an impression of farm life and rural conditions that is somewhat out of date. For the day is rapidly passing when the picture presented in "Snow-bound" or "Maud Muller" or "The Old Homestead" is typical of rural life.

In the last twenty years, rural life has undergone a profound economic and social change. Not every

community has shared yet in this advance, nor has the improvement been uniform even in those localities where it has been operative. But taking country life as a whole, the change has been revolutionary. A new day has been ushered in, and economic and social agencies have had to adapt themselves to meet new conditions. Just one or two illustrations:

A man in Indiana, eighteen miles from a railroad, described the change thus: "When I was young, two or three days were needed to dispose of a load of hogs. We took chances on what the market would be when the hogs reached the yards. Now I can put my hogs on the city market in two or three hours by truck, and learn from the radio what the market is, before I leave home."

A certain official from Cornell University was not long ago stopping over night in a little village, and asked his host what his occupation was.

"I'm a rural mail carrier," he explained. "Been on the same route for fourteen years."

"Have you seen any change in the farmers' mail in those fourteen years?" I asked.

"Change! You should have seen the little packet of letters I used to carry! Just a few letters with a strap around them, except on Friday when the local paper came out. But now! On my route, there are 130 farm families, and 128 of them take dailies. I carry between three and four hundred farm journals every week. One man takes seven agricultural papers. Oh, these farmers of ours are up-to-date!"

As an indication of the changed standard of living under the conditions of rural life as found in many sections today, compare the following statements of

expenditures of a father and his son. Both lived on the same farm. Each had to support the same-sized family, three adults and three children.

<i>Father's Family</i>		<i>Son's Family</i>	
<i>Expenses</i>		<i>Expenses</i>	
<i>in 1880</i>		<i>in 1924</i>	
\$ 1.73	Light, including up-keep.....	\$ 99.00	
52.00	Food	447.73	
93.68	Clothing	280.15	
61.81	Three children	411.43	
72.20	Church	95.07	
6.40	Doctor and medicine	167.30	
2.50	Papers and books.....	161.70	
.00	Trips and vacations.....	22.26	
.00	Amusements	27.65	
14.96	General operation (coal, gaso- line, auto, labor).....	691.65	
16.17	Miscellaneous	159.82	
\$321.45		\$2563.76	

The father's family bought cloth by the yard, but the son's family bought ready-made clothes. The education of the son's children is costing over twice as much as his own, due to the fact that teachers' salaries have nearly trebled. The father took two papers only; the son, during the year, bought a set of the Harvard Classics. The father's family's light bill for the year was: nine gallons of kerosene, \$1.08, six lamp chimneys, \$0.59, and one wick, \$0.06, a total of \$1.73. The son spends two dollars a month for fuel for his Delco lighting system, while the up-keep and depreciation is \$75 a year.

In song and story, the "Little Red School House" has filled an important part in any portrayal of rural

life in the United States. Its day is not entirely past. It may come back again into its own. But it is a fact that today 40 percent of the 11,000,000 country school children are enrolled in consolidated and village schools.

These are but incidents, taken at random, but they serve to show us how every phase of country life has, within the last few years, taken on a new meaning; how the existing institutions have had to be recast to conform to new conditions.

We must remember, however, that conditions are not everywhere the same. We are speaking of the conditions under which millions of persons are living. In many places, progress is just beginning. Isolation, like a grey mist, still encloses many country homes. While it is true that the newer and better rural life is coming more and more into being, it is also true that there are millions of rural people who live away from improved highways, whose one-room schools have only a part-time session, who have never owned an automobile or heard a radio. In one New England diocese, the story is told of two farm-boys, seventeen years of age, living within twenty miles of the coast, who had never seen salt water. In the same region, it is not unusual to come across women over seventy years of age who have never seen a railway train. The situation is complex because we deal with many people, in many communities, living under varying conditions. And the call to the Christian Church in rural work derives its force, not from improved conditions only, wide-spread though they be, but also from the dreary monotone of existence which still besets farm life in many a locality.

FACTORS BRINGING ABOUT THE NEW CONDITIONS

The goal toward which the country people of the United States are moving with a growing momentum, is that of better economic and social conditions. Our Church, to do her duty to these people, and to plan constructively for the future in rural work, must know something of the agencies that are bringing about this change, and the direction of the progress; and learn how to fit her service into this growing movement.

What, then, are the more important factors in this change?

Improved Farming Methods and Machinery

Farming is fast becoming a scientific business. The President of the Michigan State Agricultural College enumerates some of the ways in which this is manifest: (1) "Thousands of farmers are farming on a scientific basis. They use the results of soil and fertilizer analysis; they cultivate, not to kill weeds, so much as to conserve moisture; horticulturists spray their trees according to formulæ laid down by experimenters; dairymen use the 'Babcock test' for determining the fat-content of milk; stock-feeders utilize the scientists' feeding rations. (2) The number of specialists among farmers is increasing. This is a sign of progress surely. More and more farmers are coming to push a single line of work. (3) New methods are being rapidly adopted. Not so many years ago hardly a fruit-grower sprayed for insect and fungous pests; today it is hard to find one who does not. The coöperative creamery has revolutionized the character of butter production."*

*K. L. Butterfield, *Chapters on Rural Progress*, p. 47, e.s.

The United States Department of Agriculture recently made a study of 3,954 farms in typical areas in New York, Iowa, Colorado, and California, and found that new practices have been adopted as a result of agricultural extension work in 74 percent of the farms in these areas. The effect of extension work has been enormous and far-reaching.

This advance in methods and production has been made possible largely through the use of improved farm machinery.

"Farm labor was 18 percent more effective in 1920 than in 1910, in spite of a decrease of 4.2 percent in the number of farm workers."*

"A man can farm twelve times as much land as his grandfather did a hundred years ago, due to improved machinery."†

In a study of 70,000 farmers made by a big co-operative agency in the East (Dairymen's League Co-operative Association) it is reported that two farmers out of every three own one or more silos. One-seventh of these farms are on electric-power lines. Half of the farmers use gasoline engines to saw their wood, grind their feed, and pump their water. A third of them milk their cows by machinery, and a third do not even carry water into the house, but pump it in by machinery or use gravity systems.

Good Roads and Automobiles

Production is one side of farming, transportation and marketing the other.

**Bulletin of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics*, 1924.

†R. A. Felton, *Our Templed Hills*, Chap. I.

Just as improved farming methods and machinery have revolutionized production, so good roads and automobiles and trucks have wrought a tremendous change in getting the produce to market.

A survey of highway conditions in the United States in 1904, showed that there were then slightly over 150,000 miles of improved roads. A similar survey in 1921, showed over 385,000 miles of surfaced highways; and it is estimated that by the close of 1925, the total was over 500,000, and increasing at the rate of about 40,000 miles a year.*

Along with this we note the steady increase in the use of automobiles and trucks for both pleasure and business. Six typical New York counties were selected by the State Department of Highways, and for two days during the month of August the traffic was studied on certain roads. For the years 1909, 1916, 1919, 1920, and 1922, the number of horses on the roads were as follows: 1,074, 903, 437, 339, 164. Only 16 percent of the number of horses traveled over the roads in 1922 as compared with 1909. During these years, the motor vehicles passing the same six points in these counties increased in number as follows: 459, 1,904, 4,039, 8,073, 10,854—an increase of 2400 percent. That is, horses decreased by 84 percent while automobiles increased 2400 percent.

"It is estimated that in Connecticut 90 percent of all farm produce is hauled by truck. It costs thirty cents a ton-mile to haul wheat with horses and wagons; fifteen cents to haul it with trucks."† We need not, however, mourn the passing of "Old Dobbin," for his

*See *Yearbook of the Department of Agriculture*, 1924.

†R. A. Felton, *loc. cit.*

tribe is not decreasing as fast as one might suppose in spite of the growing use of the automobile, truck, and tractor. Between 1910 and 1920, the number of horses and mules in the United States increased 4.8 percent. More recently, however, the number of horses has decreased, while mules have steadily increased in number, but not rapidly enough to take the place of horses.

But not only has the business of the farmer been helped by good roads and motor transportation; his social and educational opportunities also have been wonderfully enriched.

He has been brought within reach of the town—not an unmixed blessing to be sure. And through the use of his own car and the rapidly developing bus lines, the isolation of rural people in many places is fast becoming a thing of the past. “Mainly as the work of the automobile and improved roads, also, the one-time isolation of the farmer is known no more. How complete that isolation was in some parts of our country, only those who experienced it can know. Scarcely anywhere is there now even an approach to the conditions of life which, three decades ago, were accepted as inevitable in a farmer’s life. . . . The farmer has come to share in the pleasures and opportunities for cultural improvement which formerly were out of his reach. . . . Progress in rural education is predicated upon the possibility of consolidation of the time-honored little red school-houses. . . . Such consolidation is dependent upon road-improvement, and has become possible only as highways have been constructed and buses employed to bring children from their homes to their more distant schools. Similar opportunities for more effective service are afforded by the better roads to the churches.

. . . The improved road and the automobile are striking a most effective blow at provincialism and sectional prejudice. Someone has said, with truth, that if the automobile had been invented forty years earlier, there would have been no Civil War. Wars, strife, all misunderstandings, are bred of ignorance which is the offspring of isolation. . . . In a year it is estimated that the millions of automobiles account for a passenger-mileage at least ten times the passenger-mileage of the railroads, and do so without measurably reducing the total passenger-miles rendered by the railroads.”*

The Coöperative Movement

“Men are at present so disconnected that the tides of life will not plan.” Thus Woodrow Wilson once described a certain situation. It may be taken as a true picture of much that is characteristic of rural life. Farm life, particularly under old conditions, bred a spirit of independence. Each farm was pretty well able to take care of the needs of its overseers. There were no fixed hours of labor, and no overlords but the seasons and weather. Even though the independence thus engendered in the farmer oftentimes amounted to crankiness and stinginess, still it was the kind of life that his profession made easy for him.

But a new order was coming. The simplicity of the old farm industry was being superseded by a complex system of buying and selling in the larger markets; and this, the farmer could not do to advantage by himself. The farmers of a district began to find it cheaper to buy together in large lots; and more profitable to do their selling through their own central agencies. So

**Yearbook of the Department of Agriculture, 1924.*

the economics and the common sense of the situation brought about coöperation.

“Coöperative marketing has increased fivefold in the last ten years. Seventy-five percent of the dried fruit is now being market coöperatively, and the same is true of citrus fruits and tobacco. In one year, recently, farmers marketed over a billion dollars worth of produce coöperatively. Only a short time ago the tobacco market in the South was paralyzed; the ‘night-riders’ destroyed the crops, burned hundreds of tobacco barns, and even caused some loss of life. But in 1920, co-operative marketing replaced this turmoil, and now a quarter of a million tobacco growers belong to the tobacco pool.

“The coöperative associations handle 90 percent of the California raisins, 85 percent of the prunes, and nearly 80 percent of the peaches. More than three-fourths of the citrus fruits we buy yearly, come on the market through coöperative channels; and most of these organizations are scarcely ten years old.

“In 1920, there began a nation-wide development of agencies for selling apples coöperatively. In the same year coöperative cotton-marketing began in the South; and, a year later, the American Cotton Growers Exchange was organized.

“The four thousand livestock shipping associations in the North Central States have nearly all been organized since 1916. It is claimed that over a million dollars were saved in one year alone by the coöperative marketing of wool.

“It was only five years ago that the Dairymen’s League was started. Five years ago the present directors were walking between plow handles, milking cows,

and pitching hay, far away from their present offices in New York City. Each sold his milk separately and went his own way. Now these same five men compose the executive committee of the Dairymen's League Co-operative Association, which has a membership of 70,000 farmers and does six million dollars worth of business a month. There are 173 other coöperative milk-marketing associations in the United States, most of which are less than ten years old.*

"Half a million farmers sell their grain annually through the five-thousand farmers' elevators. The six hundred million dollars worth of grain they handle each year is an indication of the vast proportions to which coöperative marketing has come. In some States, nearly all the chief crops are marketed to some extent coöperatively, and this change has come about in the last decade."†

For the Church, the significance of the growth of the coöperative movement goes beyond its economic advantages. Especially in two respects it demands the attention of all Christian bodies.

Coöperation is rapidly becoming the mode in which the farmer's thinking and acting is done. He buys co-operatively; he farms coöperatively; he sells coöperatively; community advantages come from coöperative action. Everywhere he sees it in action and understands its value—*except* in the rural churches. There, to a large extent, wasteful competition still obtains. Is it any wonder that one-half of the rural churches are losing ground! Waste, inefficiency, competition, repel

*The American Farm Bureau Federation has recently published a book on Coöperative Marketing, the editor of which is Herrman Steen. In this volume much additional information on the subject of coöperative marketing may be secured.

†R. A. Felton, *loc. cit.*

him. Rightly or wrongly, he becomes skeptical about this institution where the leaders are so often fighting one another, instead of coöperating for the benefit of the whole community.

Consider, further, that the coöperative movement cannot be built successfully upon economic considerations alone. Fundamental human qualities become involved. "Through the coöperative movement the prevalent economic competitive system may be supplanted; not by chaos, suffering and revolution, but by an ordered, evolutionary method which employs the humane qualities of friendship and mutual trust instead of rivalry and antagonism."*

In Denmark, where the coöperatives have been most conspicuously and permanently successful, they have taken into consideration not only matters of buying and selling, of production and marketing, but they have also fostered all movements looking to the social and educational improvement of the people.

The growth of the coöperatives is one of the most important and hopeful signs of the agricultural situation in America. Its success must depend, not on iron-clad agreements that hold its members under threat of court procedure if they violate their contracts, but on the training of coöperators who will trust their fellow-men, and work for the good of the whole group as well as for their own advantage. This is as much a Christian as an economic concept. "I regard true coöperation as applied Christianity." (Secretary Wallace)

The greater part of the laboring people of the United States are alienated from the Church on the assumption

*J. P. Warbasse, in Introduction to Charles Gidiss' *Consumers' Coöperative Societies*, 1922.

that the Church really doesn't know their problems or care much about them. May not this serve as a warning to us not to let this great movement which has such Christian basis and which ultimately will affect the lives of more people than does industry itself, develop apart from the sympathy and understanding of the Church. The Church should give its active support to those phases of this movement that are admittedly the application of Christian principles.

The Telephone, Radio, Parcel Post, Etc.

The telephone was the first of the more recent inventions to come into general use in rural communities. It serves both as a great measure of protection to the lonely farm-house, and also as a means for dissemination of community gossip. The "party line" is the rural tea-party and newspaper combined. Just take down the receiver at any time, and you can spend a pleasant and instructive half-hour—unless the subject suddenly switches to eavesdroppers.

In Colorado it is, or used to be, customary for isolated farmers to use their wire fences as telephone lines. When the woman of the house wanted to spend the evening with a neighbor and yet had a baby who might wake and cry, she simply called up "Central" and said that the receiver was in the baby's crib, and, in case the baby woke and cried, would "Central" please call Mrs. So-and-so's where the mother was visiting.

And now comes the radio with its ever-increasing marvels. Out on the farm, away from the interference of nearby sending stations, is the ideal place for its use. It is said that in Iowa alone there are 83,500 receiving sets on farms. And just what must it mean

to bring so much of the beauty and culture and information of the world right into the farmers' homes, without the delay of a second! It is for rural life a transforming miracle.

"Last night I heard Schumann-Heink," remarked a farmer the other day at the usual winter morning gathering about the stove in the country store; "and I tell you that old lady can surely sing. Haven't heard anything like it since Judy Claybrook used to lead the choir at Ebenezer before she lost her teeth."

About the only limit to the practical and cultural value of the radio to the farmer is the kind of programs that are put on the air, and his ability to stay awake after eight-thirty at night to listen to them.

Some one recently remarked that in traveling through the West, even in the smaller places, the young girls were dressed just about as the girls in the large cities. And there is no reason why they should not be. The development of the parcel post and the big mail-order houses has brought to the farmer's gate the facilities of the world's markets. While it has hurt the trade of the country store, it has opened up to the people of the rural districts new opportunities to be like other folks, and to secure many things for their own improvement and comfort that otherwise would be denied them.

The Rural Church and the New Rural Life

Thus a new day has come for the American farm family. New methods of farming, new means of communication, a new spirit of coöperation—all these have brought a tremendous change in rural life. To meet the new conditions, to take advantage of the new opportunities, rural institutions have had to change. The

better farm-home today is as comfortable in regard to light, heat, and water, as the city apartment. The country-school system has undergone a most radical change as good roads, automobiles, and different educational ideals have brought about the consolidated school.

But there is one institution in the rural community that too often moves along the same lines, and follows the same program now as thirty years ago; and whose leaders seem unaware of the new spirit and opportunities all about them. It is the rural church, strangely conservative, sadly incompetent.

The following chapter will give a summary of the condition of the rural church in the United States today. It is not an encouraging picture, though its shadow is lightened here and there by glowing examples which show what the country church can do when it realizes the opportunities of a new day, and adapts itself thereto.

POPULATION-DRIFT

Depletion of the rural population by a flow of its people to the cities and towns has always been a factor in the life of any nation. It is a condition that necessarily must exist, and from which come many very excellent results. It is only when the population-drift becomes too accelerated, and takes from the country districts too great a part of the better class of people that the movement becomes dangerous to national welfare. "The population-movement from the country to the cities, within proper limits, should be looked upon as desirable. The danger is that the process will be too selective, taking the best stock from the rural com-

munity and leaving the weaker elements of the population on the farm to the detriment, not only of agriculture, but of the Nation as a whole; for the farms of this country may be likened to the seed-beds of the Nation."*

Let us see what the facts are in the United States as to the movement of our people from the country to the city.

TABLE I
RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION UNITED STATES, 1880-1920¹

Year	Number			Percent		Percent Increase	
	Total	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural	Urban	Rural
1920	105,710,620	54,304,603	50,866,899	51.4	48.6	25.1	3.1
1910	91,972,266	42,623,383	49,348,883	46.3	53.7	38.3	9.1
1900	75,994,575	30,797,185	45,197,390	40.5	59.5	35.5	12.3
1890	62,947,714	22,720,223	40,227,491	36.1	63.9	53.8	13.6
1880	50,155,783	14,772,438	35,383,345	29.5	70.5		

¹ United States Census, 1920, "Population," p. 43.

Just a few comments on the above table.

When we speak of the depletion of the rural population, we are speaking relatively. In every decade, the rural population as a whole has shown an increase. It is only in relation to the so much greater increase in the city population that the situation becomes serious.

It is estimated that, in the decade 1900-1910, the increase in the rural population was about 8,890,000. This was partly from natural increase and partly from immigration. But, against this increase, we have to offset 924,000 persons lost to the rural element through the incorporation of rural territory and inhabitants into urban territory, 294,000 who emigrated from the

*Henry C. Taylor, former Chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, U. S. Department of Agriculture, in the *New York World*, March 1, 1925.

United States, and about 3,559,000 who moved from the country to the cities. This leaves a net increase of but 4,151,000. (See Gillette, *Rural Sociology*, p. 81.)

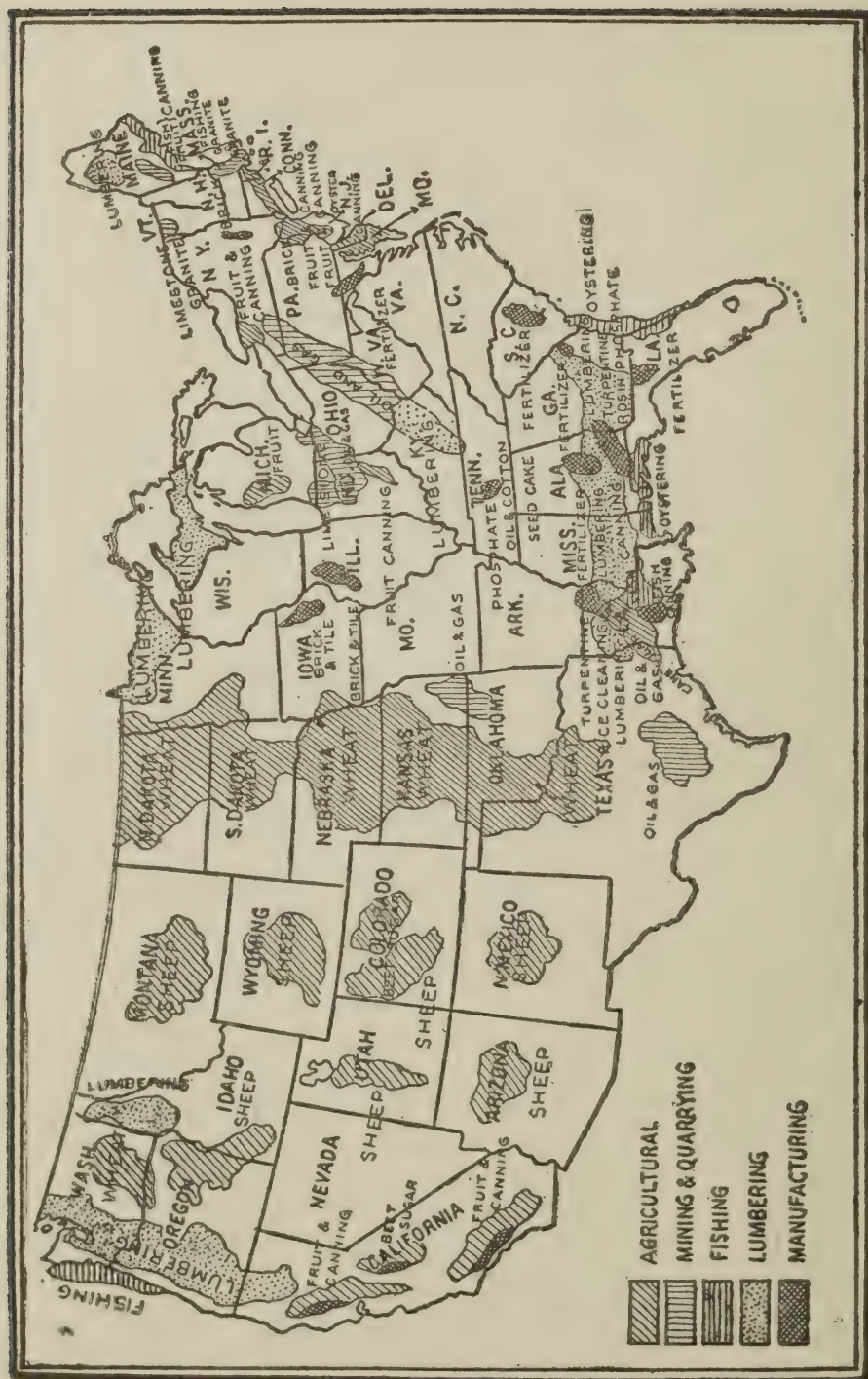
It is noteworthy that in the next decade, 1910-1920, the net rural increase was only 1,518,016, as against an urban increase of 11,681,220. The cities grew more than seven times as fast as the country.

In some sections, there is an actual, as well as a relative, depletion of the rural population. The 1920 census showed a decrease in the rural population in the following states: Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Rhode Island, New York, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Maryland, Delaware, Mississippi and Nevada.

Since 1920, this drift from the country to the city has been accelerated, due to abnormal conditions following the War. The economic depression in agriculture has been the chief factor in this movement. During 1922, it is estimated that 2,000,000 persons moved from country to city. This number was partly offset by the movement of approximately 880,000 persons from city to country, leaving a net loss of 1,120,000 to the rural population in one year.*

In addition to the movement of the population from country to city, there is also a movement from one rural section to another. During most of our national development, this was seen in the great westward movement. In recent years the tide has turned, and now we find that the number of people originating in the western States and moving eastward, increasing; while those originating in eastern States and moving

* Henry C. Taylor, *loc. cit.*



INTRODUCTION TO RURAL SOCIOLOGY. By Paul L. Vogt.
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westward, is decreasing. This movement will probably continue until there is an adjustment in land-values in the older sections of the country and in the more highly developed agricultural sections of the Mississippi Valley. Whenever better opportunities for farming open up in any sections, there will be an inflow of farmers to that section. Heretofore, these better opportunities were largely in the West. With most of these western lands taken up, there is sure to be a development in many sections, the advantages of which have been heretofore overlooked. This is shown in the increase of rural population in certain fruit and trucking sections of the East and South.

Another type of shift, of increasing importance, is that of migrant labor. It is estimated that at least 1,500,000 laborers are compelled to shift from section to section with change of season, in order to meet the fluctuating demand for labor in wheat harvest, fruit, lumber, and similar industries.

The accompanying map from Vogt's *Rural Sociology* shows the distribution of the areas where the problem of transient labor is most marked.

A general movement of southern Negro farmers to northern industrial zones, has constituted an important population shift during the past few years. In 1922, 32,000, or 13 percent of the total number of Negro farm hands or laborers in Georgia, moved north. Other southern States reported a somewhat similar condition. High industrial wages, boll-weevil conditions, and a general unrest among the Negroes as a result of the World War, are given as the principal reasons for this movement.

According to the *Negro Year Book* for 1925, the total number taking part in this movement in the last eight years is estimated at about 580,000. There are signs, however, that the peak of this movement has been passed.

The problems arising from the population-movement are likely to be with us continuously. In the first place, improved methods of agriculture have made it possible for the farmer of today to feed half as many people again as his father could. Therefore, proportionately, less persons are needed to produce the food of the Nation. (See Taylor, *loc. cit.*)

Also, as long as the birth rate in the country is higher than in the city, there must be a population-movement of the excess rural population to the industrial centers.

So this problem is not one that will quickly or automatically adjust itself. The shift of population, the changes in its nature, are facts that must be continuously borne in mind by those who are planning constructively for the social and religious betterment of the rural sections. Shifts of population readily give to the country work its counterpart of the down-town city parish.

It should be recognized that at the bottom of these population-movements lie the grim facts of economic necessity. We should realize also how this same factor enters so much into all social development. The colored migration, the seasonal movement of farm laborers, the steady flow of farmers into lands of bright opportunities, and the giving of so much of the best of rural life to the demands of industry, all have as

their basis the individual's desire to better his economic condition.

Likewise the development of social institutions, the home, the school, and other organizations for social advancement, as well as the material prosperity of the Church, all await upon economic prosperity in order to attain any measureable degree of advancement.

But fundamental and grim as this economic factor is, we must not think of it as being evil in itself. It has its place in the Kingdom of God on this earth. Not a first place—that is reserved for the Kingdom itself and its righteousness—but an important one. To recognize and to spiritualize the economic necessities of life is a duty of the Church. Country ministers, therefore, ought to be interested in the economic welfare of their people, not as an end in itself ; but as a powerful, though dangerous, means to something higher.

THE NATURE OF THE COUNTRY'S CONTRIBUTION TO CITY LIFE

Thus far we have been considering population-movements, particularly the rural population's contribution to the cities, in terms of numbers. As such, the facts are disquieting enough. However, we can understand the full significance of the country's gift of life to the cities only when we look also at the quality of the contribution.

Sir Henry Rew, K.C.B., a leader in English rural life, recently said that, in England, they were interested in maintaining a rural population not primarily from the point of view of food supply, but principally that there might be a reservoir of strong, healthy, clean-

blooded people from which the city populations might constantly draw. It is a problem of biogenetics rather than of economics. They fear to let England become too predominately industrial and commercial, lest the quality of her people deteriorate.

In American life it is easy to multiply examples of the way in which rural life has contributed to the city through the many who have become leaders in all walks of life. Early in 1912, some 500 leading business and professional men of the cities of New York State met at a banquet. During the evening, it was discovered that nine-tenths of these influential city leaders had come from the country. We are told that all of the Presidents of the United States were born in towns or country sections, except one, President Roosevelt, who, it must be noted, probably has done more for the American farmer than any other Chief Executive. We are also reminded that all of the great leaders in the World War were from rural sections, except one—the Kaiser.

But such generalizations are open to criticism, and are apt to be misleading and somewhat unfair to our city brethren. Moreover, the accuracy of such particular lists is not needed to establish the fact that those who have gone from the country to the city have supplied to our Nation, as to all Nations, a quality of leadership in every walk of life that has been indispensable in America's development.

The Episcopal Church must realize how great is her obligation to that proportionately small part of her communicant strength which is rural. Only 17 per cent of the communicant strength of the Church is in

towns and villages of 2,500 and under, and yet in the triennium of 1922-25, 31 percent of those ordained were born in rural districts. Of the Bishops of the Church, 40 percent were born in small towns and rural places. A rector of a church in a North Carolina town recently preached in one of the Baltimore churches. After the service, thirteen persons who had formerly been members of his parish in North Carolina came up and spoke to him. These facts are just indications of a great truth. Continuously there has flowed from the country parish to the city, into the pulpit as well as into the pews, the best the country has to offer.

And the city must not forget how costly to the country parish this contribution has been. Often the moving of a single person or family from a country parish will destroy the better part of its organization, or cripple its finances severely; while the relative gain to the city church will hardly be noticed. Any country minister can bear witness to the havoc that may be wrought in a country church by the loss of one person. That one individual may be the whole choir, or the only reliable leader in the church.

It is important also that the country church minister should know of the great population-movements in our land, and accept the condition as a plain fact in the situation, that he be not dismayed. When this fact operates to affect his work in a very intimate way, the country minister must be one who keeps no company with discouragement, and takes no counsel with dismay. He may build up a working organization by months of labor, and see it go to pieces in a day; but this is

inherent in his task, and he should not undertake rural work unless he is ready to face such conditions. If he plans to build up a prettily working parish organization, let him look elsewhere than in the rural mission field.

And, likewise, the Church and her leaders should realize that any rural parish that is able to hold its own is doing a progressive and constructive work. It will not, however, show its growth in numbers unless one looks on the city parish lists.

In the country, we try to build character into our boys and girls; and, just at maturity, the tide carries a great part of them to the towns and cities. Many are lost to the Church. More become loyal supporters and workers in the parishes there. It is hard on the country parish, if one thinks of that parish or its growth as an end in itself. It is great work, however, for the Kingdom of God.

TENANCY

The Facts. One result of the population-movement to the cities is the tremendous increase in tenancy in the United States. In 1920, 38 percent of the tillable land was farmed by tenants. By 1925, the percentage had increased to 67.

Tenancy is not, of course, altogether undesirable. It is the only way in which many large farms can be operated today. It is the usual way, and almost the sole way, whereby the non-land-owner of limited means can raise himself to the land-owning class.

The Social Consequences. Often the social consequences of tenancy in a rural community are disastrous. It is a sign of the breakdown of the independent, intel-

ligent farm-owning class, whose place is taken by those whose advantages have been limited, who often are of a poor grade of intelligence, and whose sense of community responsibility, if it ever existed, is almost certainly destroyed by the temporary nature of their local associations.

Recently, a farmer in Maryland, standing before his home that looked out over a beautiful and progressive section, said: "In my father's day every home you see was occupied and owned by families of fine people, whose heads were college or university graduates. This was as fine a community in which to live as could be found, socially and every other way. Today, I am the only man left about here who has had much education, and I am one of the few who owns the farm they live on. It is almost impossible to get these ignorant and suspicious tenants to coöperate even for their own very evident good in matters of buying and selling. As for the Church and schools, it doesn't make very much difference to them whether they exist or not." The Episcopal clergyman in this community ran a very successful Bible class in a room over a blacksmith shop, as the local people would not come to the church building.

Perhaps no single phase of rural life in the United States today calls for such serious study as does that revealed by the increase of tenancy. It isn't the fault of the tenant, it is his opportunity. The question is, can we hand so great a part of our rural life over to this type, while the better class of rural people flock to the cities?

It is just a very evident illustration of how sorely the country districts of the United States today need

a sound economic basis of prosperity, adorned by the finer qualities of heart and mind which only such institutions as the Church and school can give. Our country people must have economic and social opportunities comparable to advantages offered by the cities, in order to secure upon the land a healthy, wholesome, and contented citizenry. Such a condition cannot be brought about apart from the coöperation of the country church.

WHAT IS THE RURAL PROBLEM?

The following statements from men who have given their whole lives to its study may help us to answer this question.

"The farmer problem consists in maintaining upon our farms a class of people who have succeeded in procuring for themselves the highest possible class status, not only in the industrial, but in the political and social order—a relative status, moreover, that is measured by the demands of American ideals. The farm problem thus connects itself with the whole question of democratic civilization."*

"The American Rural Problem is to maintain upon the land a class of people who represent the best American ideals—in their industrial success, in their political influence, in their intelligence and moral character, and in their general social and class 'power'."†

AGENCIES AT WORK ON THE RURAL PROBLEM

The Church, or any one of its workers, must never feel that they are attacking this great question single-handed, even as far as the forces of this world are

* K. L. Butterworth, *Chapters in Rural Progress*, p. 15.

† *Annals of the American Academy*, p. 15, March, 1912.

concerned. The following list will give some idea of the agencies with which the Church should be an intelligent partner in working at the rural problem.*

I. International

1. International Institute of Agriculture
2. International Coöperative Societies
3. World Agricultural Society

II. National and Regional

1. U. S. Department of Agriculture
2. Foreign Departments of Agriculture
3. National Associations of Special Interests
4. Regional Associations

III. State

1. State Departments of Agriculture
2. State Experiment Stations
3. State Agricultural Societies
4. State Agricultural Colleges
5. State Extension Department
6. Farm Bureaus
7. State Marketing Bureaus

IV. Business Organizations with Farm Interests

1. Chambers of Commerce
2. Railroads
3. Business concerns with goods to sell to farmers
4. Business organizations which buy from farmers
5. Insurance Companies
6. Bonds

Actually, not all of the agencies listed above are of equal value. It would be wise if those interested in rural work in any State would put themselves in close touch with their own State Agricultural College, and the various forms of extension service which these

**The Agencies Working for Agriculture*, compiled by M. G. Lacey, from Bureau of Markets, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

colleges offer. This is the first and a most valuable step, which can be supplemented later by contact with the United States Department of Agriculture and the farm interest departments of the various business organizations.

It is not only the governmental and business agencies of the country that are interested in rural life. Under the American Country Life Association, twenty-one agencies engaged in rural social work have come together in order to render more effective service to rural America. On the list are such organizations as the Red Cross, Farm Bureau, Child Health Association, Recreation Department of the Russell Sage Foundation, and others dealing with every phase of rural social needs. The services of many of these organizations are extremely helpful to the rural social worker. Full information concerning the agencies involved and the various forms of service they can render may be obtained from Mr. Henry Israel, Secretary American Country Life Association, 1849 Grand Central Terminal Building, New York City. This association also publishes a monthly paper, *Rural America*, which is the best medium of social information for the rural worker.

To these governmental and social agencies dealing with rural life, there must be added the departments of the various religious bodies in this country, which have been organized specifically on behalf of rural church work. The Roman Catholic, Moravian, Congregational, Methodist Episcopal, Reformed in the United States, Methodist Episcopal South, Baptist, Disciples, and Presbyterian Churches, have whole or part time rural

secretaries. Some of these organizations, notably the Methodist Episcopal under Paul L. Vogt, the Congregational under Malcolm C. Dana, and the Presbyterian under Warren E. Wilson, have done pioneer work in approaching the rural problem on its social and religious sides, and their work has been of incalculable value.

In June, 1924, the National Council of the Episcopal Church organized a Division of Rural Work under the direction of the Departments of Missions and Christian Social Service. The policies of this Division have been not greatly different from those of the other religious bodies; indeed, the experience and advice of these others have been most helpful, and much of the work of the Division is being done, and must be done, in coöperation with them.

The activities of the Division of Rural Work may be summarized as follows:

Education. To arouse the Church to a recognition of the rural problem confronting our Nation, and the Church's special duty in regard thereto. The rural field is the great neglected missionary field before us today. Our people must know the conditions before they can meet the need. This means speaking to all sorts of gatherings of Church people on rural conditions; utilizing summer schools and conferences, and the employment of such means of printed publicity as, for example, the opportunity which this studybook affords.

Conferences: National. Each summer, at the University of Wisconsin, rural workers in the Episcopal Church from all over the country come together for a National Conference. This is held in connection with the University's Summer School for Rural Ministers.

Regional. In coöperation with the rural divisions of the churches mentioned above, and as a part of the regular Summer School course, Summer Schools for rural workers are held by the following Universities and State Colleges of Agriculture: The University of Wisconsin, Cornell, Ohio State, and Missouri; and the State Colleges of Agriculture of Kansas and Michigan. At these colleges, rural ministers have the advantage of the special and technical training in rural and community problems offered by the University professors, and also the benefit of conferences with members of their own communion on matters of special interest to their own Church's work in this field.

Diocesan. From the national or regional conferences, men have come back to their dioceses with a new appreciation of the rural problem, and some ideas as to the responsibility of the Church in relation thereto. Under their leadership, and with the coöperation of the Bishops, rural diocesan conferences have been held, as a result of which a new attitude toward rural work and practical plans for its development have been evolved. It seems that, for any diocese, this is the first step—to call together those doing rural work; and, from their counsel and experience, gain an understanding of the task, and create a reasonable plan looking towards the performance of it.

Seminaries. Most of the future clergymen of the Church are passing, year by year, through the Seminaries. We want them to know of the opportunities for service which the rural fields offer. To this end, lectures on rural work are given by this Division at five of our Seminaries, and at least three others are

teaching the subject through numbers of their own faculty.

National Headquarters. The rural worker has often felt that the conditions and needs of his work were not understood by the Church. So predominantly urban has the Episcopal Church been in point of numbers and in its general outlook, that naturally most of its publications and plans for work that have been put forth have been from the point of view of the city or town parish. There has never been a conscious overlooking of the rural field, but there has been a lack of someone at Headquarters whose business it was to keep before the minds of the leaders of the Church the special needs relating thereto. It has been possible for this Division, through representation on the Commission on Small and Rural Church Schools and similar organizations, to see that the special needs of the rural workers are understood and considered.

CHAPTER III

THE RURAL CHURCH IN THE UNITED STATES

“**A**NY consideration of the problem of the rural life that leaves out of account the functions and possibilities of the Church, and of related institutions would be grossly inadequate.” With these words the Roosevelt Commission on Country Life emphasized their conviction of the importance of the subject with which this chapter deals. And they saw the problem from the point of view of a Government commission dealing with problems that were vital to the welfare of the country. Church people, because they are Christians as well as patriots, will find a double reason for carefully studying this subject. For, in addition to our concern regarding the welfare of the Nation, we have a responsibility for the welfare of all the citizens of the greater commonwealth of God’s Kingdom on earth. So, as we approach the consideration of religion in rural America, we must add to our patriotic concern a sense of missionary responsibility.

Fortunately, we have some very reliable information on this topic. The Institute of Social and Religious Research, from material gathered all over the country by their own field workers and from other reliable sources, has made an accurate study of the town and country church in the United States. It was an immense task, and one of tremendous importance in putting the problem fairly before us. As one government official, in reviewing the survey says, “This

courageous survey, this patient climb to the top of the mountain, this sweep of the comprehending eye over all the regions, over all the countries, has reduced the vastness of the rural church problem to some order, and the confusion to some clarity. The problem of the rural church will never again baffle the mind and bewilder the soul of America with vastness and confusion." This approval of the survey, from Dr. C. J. Galpin of the United States Department of Agriculture, is given because some of the facts revealed in the survey seem unbelievable. Yet the facts and figures corroborate and amplify facts which the United States Census had already partly revealed.

In considering the facts set forth in this survey, it must be noted that the compilers did not include the Roman Catholic Church. The work was described by those who did it, as "a survey of the white Protestant Churches in the town and country sections of the United States."

In the chart given below, the 101,000 rural churches are in places of 5,000 population and under.

THE TRUTH ABOUT 101,000 RURAL CHURCHES

It is estimated that there are about 101,000 Protestant churches in rural America.

Long ago when there were only some 100 churches practically the whole rural population went to them. Now that churches and population have multiplied a thousandfold, only one person out of five goes to church.

For nine people out of every one hundred in rural America, this may be because there is no church to go to, since one-seventh of all town and country communities are without Protestant churches.

On the other hand, in many communities the Protestant churches are fairly jostling one another in a competitive scramble for members.

The Home Mission Boards often unwittingly assist in this fight for existence. In fact, one out of every five rural churches receives Home Mission aid, and more than half of these subsidized churches are in active competition with other subsidized churches.

Very frequently such subsidized competition is found between churches that teach almost identical doctrines, and even at times between churches of the same denomination.

Yet there are not enough pastors to go round, with the result that seven out of every ten rural churches have only a fraction of a pastor apiece.

At that, there is not enough money to pay even these fractional pastors, one-third of whom can only eke out a bare livelihood by work at some other occupation as well as the ministry.

No wonder that two-fifths of the churches are standing still or losing ground, while only one-half make an annual gain in membership of as much as ten percent.

Situations are revealed here that need further emphasis. The country population falls into groups as radically different from each other in material prosperity and spiritual opportunities as the slum-dwellers and the rich folk of the cities. The religious conditions in these groups are alarmingly diverse. These different communities have their own problems—some underchurched, others overchurched. We will look more carefully at the facts in this chart.

The indifference to organized religion on the part of vast numbers of rural people

Only 16 percent are members of any church. Only 20 percent go to church. And yet we hear of the god-

less cities, and have had a comfortable feeling of security in the assumption that, even if the city people were not as careful about church-going and as strict about standards of conduct as was once thought to be necessary and wise, still the nation had, in its rural people, a conservative, God-fearing set of folk who would, for a long time to come, keep the nation safe for Christian Democracy. As a matter of fact, though the percentage of Church membership in a community does not determine its real religion, it is significant that the highest percentage of Church membership is found in cities of from 5,000 to 100,000 population; less in cities over 100,000; and least of all in places under 5,000. The Churches are reaching the small-town and country people less effectively than they reach any other class in the nation. Whether this is the fault of the Churches or of the country people, is another matter. The fact that only one out of five of the small-town and country people go to services with any degree of regularity, is an indictment of religious conditions in rural districts. It has been suggested that one reason why there is such a low average of rural church-attendance is that so high a percentage—nearly 30 percent—of the nation's land-workers are new-comers—the foreign-born, or the children of the foreign-born. There are States, such as North Dakota, where nearly every other farmer belongs to other than American nativity; and whole sections of the country, as in the Middle West, where the foreign-born are in excess of two-fifths of the population. But it is estimated that at the present time more than 50 percent of these people are unministered to by any Church, Catholic or Protestant. Where anything like

an earnest and comprehensive attempt has been made by churches to be of aid to them, as among the Mexicans in California, it has been marked by astonishing results.

The unchurched communities

"One out of seven of all town and country communities are without Protestant churches." This condition exists largely in the mid-western and western States. Here are some appeals from such sections. From a community of 200 persons: "Not a child in this community has ever attended Sunday school." From another of about the same size: "No sermon by a Protestant minister has ever been preached in this locality." "This back-to-the-land movement is fine, but why should loyal land-dwellers have to condemn their children to heathenry?" demands a distracted mother in a remote section of a western State. "My children are growing up to be little savages, so far as religion is concerned. They never have been inside a church in their lives, and they don't know what Sunday School means." As one realizes how many counties there are in which no clergyman of our Church ever ministers, we dread to think how great a number of the members of the Episcopal Church have lost the ministrations of the Church just because they have moved into the country places.

The overchurched communities

In contrast to this situation where enough churches do not exist, there is a large part of our country in which many communities are crying out for relief from the burden that their overchurched condition creates.

"There are ten times as many churches for every thousand persons in some of the rural districts of the United States as there in New York City. Yet the percentage of attendance for every thousand persons in these rural sections is slightly lower than it is even in New York. Obviously such a showing indicates a startling lack of system in the distribution of rural churches, a woeful waste of religious potentialities of the country." Who, with any knowledge of country life, has not seen the pitiful spectacle of a little village of three or four hundred souls trying to support two, three, or even five, churches? The inevitable result of this denominational rivalry is the conspicuous abandonment of rural and village churches, a fact cheerful or alarming according to whether your church or someone else's is the one abandoned.

In a town of 800 persons in a mid-western State there were eight churches. Three of them, including the Episcopal Church, were closed. A few Church folk from a nearby city moved in, and the rector from an adjoining town came over and opened up the Episcopal Church for services twice a month. "We must reopen ours too," said the officials of another of the closed churches. "And we likewise," decided those in authority in the third church. So again the community of 800 was called on to divide its interest and support among eight churches, whereas three would probably have satisfied every fundamental racial, social, theological, ecclesiastical, and temperamental difference in the community. With equal sincerity they all sing, "We are not divided."

While we are looking at this situation, not from the special point of view of the Episcopal Church, but

rather as it is viewed by leaders of those religious bodies who have done most for the rural people, two special points in their understanding of the matter should be brought out: First, that this interdenominational competition, by dividing the religious resources of a community, by preventing a spirit of community coöperation, and by necessitating the part-time services of several mediocre men instead of securing the leadership of one good man for the community, is making the churches so ineffective in spiritual power and community service, that the future of the rural church is in serious doubt. Secondly, since one out of five of these competitive churches is able to exist only by means of home-mission aid, and some one-half of these aided churches are in active competition with others of almost identical doctrinal teaching, it becomes a serious question whether it is right to use money raised for missions to keep alive these competing religious units. The best authorities, after long study on this subject, are quoted as estimating that the amount of Protestant home-mission money annually wasted in competitive religion in rural communities is, at present, \$3,000,000.

Children without God

"Millions of them are pagans in this land which we call Christian." There are fifteen million children under 21 years of age in the open-country sections of the United States. Of these, more than four million are virtual pagans, children without a knowledge of God. Dr. Brunner estimates that 1,600,000 farm children live in communities where there is no church or Sunday school of any denomination; and probably

2,750,000 do not go to any Sunday school, either because the church to which their parents belong does not have any, or because they do not care to connect themselves with such an organization. A distressing feature of this situation is that these children are not scattered more or less evenly throughout the nation so that they might be gradually assimilated into Christian communities, but are found for the most part in godless communities, out of the reach of any church. The following incident graphically portrays the situation:

"My duties a while back took me into the clover-bearing hills of a prosperous county in a dairy State. I stayed the night with a farmer's family, enjoying the hospitality and confidences of the home. Never shall I forget the two episodes of the evening.

"The milking was finally over. Twelve mighty good cows. I had been allowed to milk three, taking the mother's place on her favorite milking-stool.

"The house was on a sidehill sloping steeply to the road, and across the road was a thinly timbered twenty-acre lot. The warm milk had been poured into ten-gallon cans and carried up to where stood, in a neat little milk-house, a cream separator. When all was ready the separator began to sing.

"At the first whirring tune-up of the separator, I heard a scurrying of feet in the timber lot below, and soon a regiment of hogs and pigs was at the fence, standing with hind feet in the long trough, front feet over the top rail of the fence, black heads in a row, open mouths giving vent to a long-drawn-out squeal of jubilant petition.

"As the whir of the separator grew into a liquid hum, the squealing chorus rose to heaven, filling the valley, investing the farm like a piece of symbolism with the imperious demand of animals and crops upon the total energies of the family.

"Finally the last drop of milk went through the separator. Then the father and his two sons, with two cans and two brimming pails, took up their stately march to the squealing chorus at the trough. It looked for all the world like some priestly ritual of devotion.

"The milk was poured into the trough. The pigs ceased to chant and began to suck, guzzle, push, and grunt.

"So the day's work was over, and we sought the house. Darkness fell over the hill and valley, and the filled pigs lay down to sleep; while the farmer gathered his family about him, took up his Bible and read the scriptures.

"Conversation in the morning brought out the fact that this hillside home was virtually the only one in this prosperous clover community of a hundred farms struggling to bring up its children in the knowledge of God. No church, no Sunday school, no parochial school, no Bible class within ten miles. The gaunt father, gathering emotion as he overheard his own story, said: 'I have only one problem now. In twelve years my cows and hogs have paid for themselves, paid for my farm, built my barn and house. The one problem is not money any longer, but it is my boys and girls. They are just now at the point where the home can no longer hold them and they will, I fear, sink into the mire of this godless community.' 'What do you mean

by mire?' I inquired. 'Well, it is hard to put into words,' he continued. 'Perhaps this will give you some idea: Since I have been here, now twelve years, not a wedding has taken place anywhere hereabouts that has not been forced.' 'Why don't you start a Sunday school?' I urged. 'Too late!' he sighed. 'My children are almost beyond me. I was, I fear, too busy with my cows and pigs, and somehow the children just grew up before I knew it.' 'What will you do?' I could not refrain from asking, more to myself than to him, in my own perplexity, as I tried to share in the grievous problem he faced. 'The only thing I can do,' said he, as if the conversation had strengthened a previous resolution, 'is to yield to my wife's judgment; sell the farm, go to some safe community where there are church, Sunday school, and high school. Our great mistake was in starting out wrong'."*

Tenants without Religion

A statement about tenancy in the United States has already been made in Chapter II. We need to repeat here only the figures that indicate the rapid increase of this phenomenon in agricultural life. In 1880, 25.6 percent of the farms in the United States were tenant farms; in 1890, 28.4 percent; in 1900, 35.3; in 1910, 37 percent; in 1920, 38.1 percent; in 1924, 66.8 percent. In round figures, this represents 2,500,000 tenant operators, or 12,000,000 persons, old and young. Deducting 3,000,000 as representing that proportion of the tenant class which is verging on farm-ownership, and so not in the migrant group; and also 3,500,000 colored tenant folk, we have left more than 5,000,000

* C. J. Galpin, *Children Without God*.

white tenants with no real hold on the land, no abiding community interests. In 1922, there were 660,000 tenant-families who shifted their locations.

Even as unsuccessful as the rural church is in reaching the country people, it is relatively much more successful in winning the land-owner than the tenant. Fifty-five percent of the land-owners are Church members, twenty-four percent of the tenants. This means that of the 5,000,000 migrant white tenants in America, 1,200,000 are in the circle of direct religious influence, 3,800,000 are outside. Tenancy means poverty. To quote Dr. Galpin: "It surely will not be understood if a layman should call to mind that the genius of Christianity is its perennial Gospel—just good news—to the poor, the broken in life's struggle. If a fitter multitude than these tenants for the good tidings of Christ can be found on the face of the earth, I would like to learn of them." The tenant class represents those whose need for the Good News of abundant life has been the greatest, but whose neglect represents the Churches' great collective failure.

Similar, in many ways, to the tenant problem, is that of the migrant laborer. Our agriculture depends in a great degree upon migrant workers who travel back and forth across the country with the seasons, following one crop after another. They work in the wheat harvest, the sugar-beet fields, the canneries, and the cranberry swamps. It is estimated that a million and a half is the strength of this unorganized, uncared for, migrant army. A few weeks here, then passing on to where new harvests are waiting, they have no chance to form Church connections or establish community contacts. Yet their labor is an essential fac-

tor in the agricultural life of our land. Only here and there is any effort being made by the Churches to reach them. Is money to be the only hire of which a Christian nation feels her laborers to be worthy.

Poor Preachers and Poorer Pay

Cause and effect are closely intermingled as we study the effect of poor leadership in the rural churches, and realize that this kind of leadership is the inevitable result of the financial poverty of the country parishes. There are many glorious exceptions, where men have had the willingness, and conditions have made it possible for them, to live on in country parishes. And nowhere is the success of a clergyman more dependent on the length of his tenure than in the rural church. But too often we find the vicious cycle of a small salary, a second rate man, poor parish response; the man moves on, another of the same calibre comes at the same inadequate salary, the parish again gives a poor response, discouragement follows, and there is again a vacancy. Sometimes the process is varied by giving one man six, eight, or ten churches, thus furnishing from the whole group a living wage; and in return each church gets one-sixth, one-eighth, or one-tenth of real leadership. Another variant is to let the preacher be part farmer, or something else. As a matter of fact, one-third of all the rural ministers in the United States today "can eke out a bare livelihood only by working at some other occupation as well as the ministry."

Dividing one man among many churches is, from the point of view of community development, as disastrous a policy as having the minister work at some

other occupation. Seven out of every ten rural churches have only a fraction of a pastor apiece. The average salary given by country churches which have a full-time pastor is \$999.62, in which sum is included the rental value of a parsonage. Churches which have a non-resident minister pay an average salary of \$193.00. Is it any wonder that the average pastorate is two and one-half years—much less time than it takes really to know the community and to get ready for effective work?

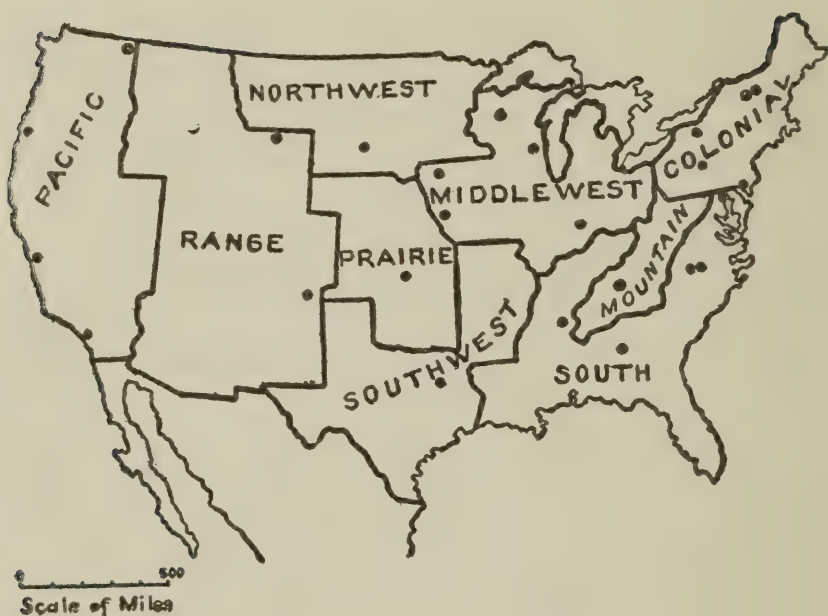
Rural life today is complex. Its problems are baffling. It is changing as rapidly as the city in many of its fundamental adjustments. It needs spiritual guidance. The giving of this guidance by the rural church must wait until a greater number of men have consecrated their lives to the service of this great and absorbing missionary field; and until Church authorities see to it that the best men obtainable can, in simple justice to their families give the whole of a life's ministry where their Master spent so much of His.

As one reads these cheerless facts concerning the rural church, he must test their accuracy in the light of his own experience. Thus, someone from a favored agricultural section, with good churches, might well say: "I don't believe that a third of the country ministers have to work at some other occupation than the ministry in order to make a living. I have never heard of a single one who had to do it unless he wanted to." A clergyman in a southern town where a careful religious census had recently been made revealing less than a hundred persons without some religious affiliation, said that it was absurd to say that only 16 per cent of the country people of the United States

belonged to some church. Within the limits of their own observation, both of these persons would be entirely right. There are two things, however, to be said in reply: First, it should be remembered that this survey covered the whole of the United States. The facts cited would be grossly untrue for any one point, but are distressingly accurate in portraying the whole situation. Secondly, various sections of the country reveal very different characteristics.

After the bird's-eye view of the whole situation as given above, we must study the special characteristics of certain sections. The North, the South, the Mid-West, and the Far West, have very different problems in rural life, and what is true of your section of the country may not be of another. We must also realize how intimately the economic, the social, and the religious phases of this whole subject are related. The country-church problem among the poor tenant class in the South, and among the comparatively prosperous and progressive landowners of other sections, will appear as two very different things. And the matter of Church development among the country folk of Maryland or Virginia, with a Church tradition of two or three centuries behind them, is an entirely different thing from missionary expansion in the new and widely scattered life of western States. For an intelligent appreciation of the rural church problem in the United States, or in our own Church, we must have, as a background, some knowledge of the economic and social differences in the various sections of the country.

The accompanying map will show the regional divisions where varying conditions were found.



The Colonial Region

This region is 75 percent urban. During the last decade, the rural population has not only relatively but actually decreased. The small towns have come to depend for their support less upon service to the surrounding country, and more upon industry. Agriculture has about struck bed-rock; and, due to the opportunities for dairying and trucking, presents a reasonably stable foundation. Various strains of European immigrants have gained a foothold on the land; and, in many cases, have almost displaced the native farmer. In some areas, hill-town decadence and folk-depletion have been a real problem. In social life, the colonial tradition has been less modified than in rural districts elsewhere. Country and small-town churches still show the characteristics of the

European traditions behind them. Longer pastorates, better equipment, and a favorable community-standing are reminiscent of the days of an Established Church.

The Mid-West Region

There were three main population movements into this section: First, from New England and New York; then from the near South, by way of the Ohio River Valley; and finally, by direct immigration from Europe, especially from Germany and Scandinavian countries. Two strips running across this section show retarded rural development. The first of these includes the southernmost counties of Ohio, Indiana and Illinois; the other, the upper peninsula of Michigan and northern Wisconsin. Wisconsin and Michigan appear as variants to the general characteristics of this region. There has been a general loss in rural population; tenancy shows a high percentage. In Iowa and Illinois, there has been an unfortunate inflation in land-values. Generally, this region is progressive. It has the best agricultural colleges; there has been an increase in coöperatives; and there is a favorable attitude toward matters of public improvement. In religious life and institutions, the colonial traditions have been overlaid; and, except in German and Scandinavian communities, the country churches usually do not have resident pastors.

The Southern Region

In any consideration of the South, the effects of the plantation system and of slavery are still obvious. One must remember, too, the economic exhaustion following

the War between the States. Today, this section stands on the threshold of a great agricultural and industrial development. It includes nearly one-third of the total area of the Union. It is richer in natural resources than any other equal area in the world. From its ports, in 1921, five times as many goods were exported as from all Pacific coast ports. Its resources of iron and coal, and its developing water-power projects, promise to make of Tennessee and northern Alabama one of the great industrial centers of the world.

Today, the South is 72.4 percent rural. The percentage of farms operated by tenants runs as high as 66 percent in some States. In education, it is the most backward part of the country. Tenancy and illiteracy go hand in hand. The rate of illiteracy among white males is 7.8 percent, a decrease of one-third in the last decade. There has been a distinct movement of the white tenant class to the cotton-mill towns and larger industrial centers.

In the South, the proportion of Protestant Church members in the total population (40.4 percent) is the highest in the United States. Its churches are, for the most part, rural churches. One-half of the rural church organizations in America are in the South. The Methodist Episcopal Church South has 17,000 rural churches. The Southern Baptist Convention claims 20,000 white country churches; the Presbyterian Church, 1,000. The Episcopal Church—no one has ever thought it worth while to count them. A keen observer says: "Religion in the South is infinitely puzzling. It is a paradox—dead, and yet alive; unprogressive and narrow, but a powerful force."

The Southern Mountain Region

"This is the backyard of five States." The people in this section are 80 percent rural. A great proportion are of native-born Anglo-Saxon stock. Economic opportunities have been meager; poverty has been general; educational opportunities, few; living conditions generally primitive; and health, bad. The problem of the Southern Mountaineer has been one of retardation and isolation. The individual is characterized by independence, aloofness, emotionalism, and mental alertness. Their religious institutions show pioneer characteristics in their extreme. Denominationalism is a dominant religious fact. Partisanship of all kinds are intense.

The Northwest Region

This section is predominantly agricultural. In the Dakotas, 85 percent of the total population is rural. The percentage of farms operated by tenants ranges from 11 in Montana to 35 in South Dakota. Agricultural coöperation has developed very greatly in this section. Both wheat and stock raising, which are extensively followed, lend themselves to coöperative organization. These States have a large number of German and Scandinavian farmers, to whom coöperation seems to come naturally. This whole area is marked by a sharp cleavage between town and city on the one hand, and open-country districts on the other. The former seem to have existed primarily to exploit, rather than to serve, the latter. From such conditions, result movements like the Non-Partisan League. Racial differences are important in the various

communities, and the language-line clearly divides the social and religious life. The size of the farms and the dispersion of the population have made social life much less cohesive than in other parts of the Mid-West. It is a difficult field for the country church. The great distances, and the indifference of many of the communities which have often been for a long time without churches, make the problem all the harder.

The Prairie Region

This is a diminishing, but prosperous section. Nebraska and Kansas are becoming the wealthiest agricultural States of the Union. Nebraska stands first among all the States in the percentage of farmers owning automobiles (75.6). Farmers' coöperation is well established and successful.

Village life is here developed less culturally than in other parts of the Mid-West, and cities are comparatively few. There is close coöperation between town and country, in contrast to the Northwest region.

In public opinion and religion, these States represent a Puritan revival. They were among the foremost advocates of Prohibition, and have been early in the field in the limitation of the use of tobacco. The influence of the Churches has generally been behind such movements. Generally the communities have fine Church buildings, and there is a strong religious feeling evident. There are less foreign-born in this region than in the States farther north.

The Southwest Region

This region, including parts of Missouri and Oklahoma, Arkansas and Texas, represents a fusion of

the southern and western characteristics. The original population was of the southern tradition; but progressive western elements have entered in, particularly in Oklahoma and Texas. Agriculture is the principal resource, and the population is 71 percent rural. Tenancy is high, being over 50 percent, excluding Missouri. The population is not homogeneous. Negroes are numerous, especially in Arkansas, and racial feeling is often intense; Texas has at least 650,000 Mexicans and about 200,000 Czecho-Slovaks, most of whom are farmers; Oklahoma has more Indians than any other State, having nearly 120,000.

Social conditions are generally like those in the poorer parts of the South. The small towns are, as a rule, primitive and unattractive, though many of the cities are well-kept and progressive.

Religious life shows both southern and western influences. Country churches are small and without resident pastors. Denominationalism is everywhere an important factor, and is accentuated by having, in many communities, the northern and southern branches of the major denominations. Emotionalism is a dominant characteristic.

The Range Region

It may perhaps be said that just two things are characteristic of the whole of this area—the mountainous country, and the light rainfall. Most of these States have very distinctive features: New Mexico, with its sparse population, two-thirds of which is of Spanish origin; Colorado and Nevada, with their great mining industries and deserted mining towns; Utah and southern Idaho, with the predominantly Mormon popula-

tion; Montana, Wyoming and northern Idaho, with their great resources of mine and forest, as well as of agriculture, largely undeveloped; Arizona and Nevada, with less than one percent of their lands improved for farming, though much is used for grazing.

Due to the great stretches of country, isolation is an outstanding characteristic. It makes for a lack of community organization and social life. Towns are scattered and permanent settlements have not generally been effected.

A characteristic of this whole region is the high quality of the population, which is chiefly American, with a high average of property-holding. They are marked by a certain freedom from convention and social restraint.

In contrast to the high quality of the population, organized religion is at low ebb, except where Mormons are found. Elsewhere, the churches are inferior in type, insecurely rooted, and of little social sympathy. They have not taken hold of the life, or commanded the spiritual attention of the people.

The Pacific Region

This whole section is characterized by a varied and prosperous agricultural life. The population is slightly more urban than rural. The coöperatives have been more successful here than in any other part of the country. The general spirit of the region is one of progress. In public improvements, this section leads the country. Its social life has the freedom and initiative characteristic of an open-air climate.

The churches have not been so successful. They are still too much under the eastern traditions, and are

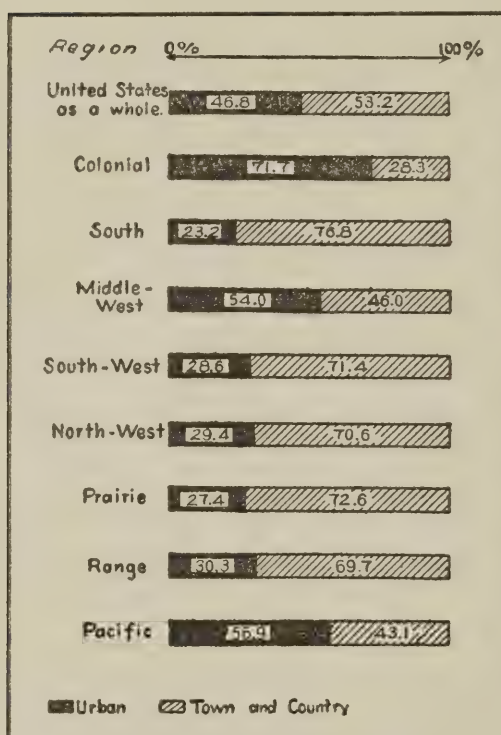
poorly appreciated by the people. However, though they lag behind the social progress of the communities, the churches are stronger than they are in the Range States.

While it has not been possible, because of the lack of exact information, to include in this summary the figures for the Roman Catholic rural churches, yet the following general figures can be given:

In the Colonial area there are more Roman Catholics in the rural sections than Protestants. In the South, they number less than two percent of the total population. In the Mid-West and Northwest regions, the Roman Catholics constitute about one-third of the total rural membership; in the Prairie region, one-fifth; in the Range States, the numbers are about equal. In the Pacific and Southwest regions, the Roman Catholic membership is slightly smaller than the non-Roman.

Although this whole analysis of the rural church in the United States was arrived at without the advantage of the coöperation of the Roman Catholic Church, its conclusions are accepted by the leaders of that Church, as is shown by the following statement of the Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Catholic Rural-Life Conference: "We have two distinct entities of population and, we might say, of civilization, in the United States—the urban and the rural. The Church is decidedly urban. So far as the Church is concerned, the country towns and villages are still *pagani*."

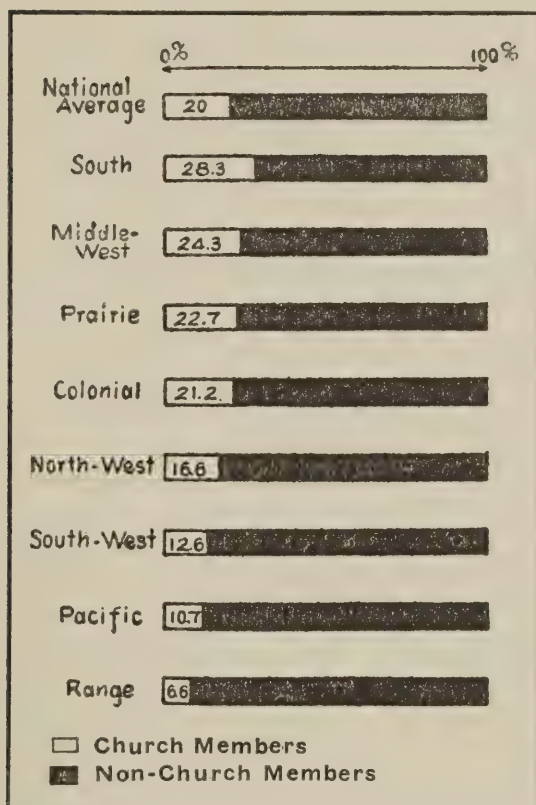
The following tables will give, in a concise form, facts about the rural church in these regional sections:



DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL POPULATION
—URBAN OR TOWN AND COUNTRY

FARM OWNERS AND FARM TENANTS CONTRASTED FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF CHURCH MEMBERSHIP—BY REGIONS

Region	Percentage of All Farm Owners in Church Membership	Percentage of All Farm Tenants in Church Membership
Colonial	23.7	26.9
South	59.5	33.5
South West	26.2	9.2
North West	16.4	7.4
Middle West	47.9	20.3
Prairie	55.6	15.8
Range	7.4	10.0
Pacific	16.5	11.5
All Regions Combined.....	36.1	23.2



POPULATION AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

Showing the Proportion of the Total Town and Country Population (White) in the Membership of the White Protestant Churches.

PROPORTION OF ALL CHURCHES RECEIVING HOME MISSION AID, BY DENOMINATIONS

Denomination	Percent of Churches Aided
Protestant Episcopal	49
M. E. South	42
M. E.	27
Lutheran (Various Synods).....	25
Congregational	23
Presbyterian, U. S. A.....	20
Baptist, South	14

Baptist, North	11
Disciples and Church of Christ.....	6
All Others	20

PROPORTION OF MINISTERS WHO ALSO HAVE
ANOTHER OCCUPATION THAN THE MINISTRY
—BY REGIONS

<i>Region</i>	
Colonial	20.7
South	48.1
South West	49.1
North West	7.5
Middle West	23.0
Prairie	27.9
Range	15.8
Pacific	17.6
All Regions Combined.....	32.9

PERCENTAGE OF RURAL CHURCHES MAKING A
NET GROWTH DURING TEN-YEAR PERIOD—
FOR SELECTED DENOMINATIONS*

<i>Denomination*</i>	<i>Percent of All Churches Making Net Growth</i>
Reformed	85.7
Congregational	71.0
Baptist	68.5
Presbyterian	65.0
Christian	63.0
Lutheran	60.0
Methodist Episcopal	52.6
Protestant Episcopal	52.3
Friends	46.2
Union or Community	38.4

The four tables given above are based on facts gathered by the Institute of Social and Religious Research, 370 Seventh Avenue, New York, N. Y., from an intensive study of twenty-five typical counties in the various regions of the country.

* Closely affiliated or related denominations are combined.

For a more detailed study of the whole problem, see *The Town and Country Church in the U. S.*, by Morse and Brunner, (Doran); and *A Social Survey in Towns and Country Areas*, by Morse, (Doran). These two books deal with the problem of the rural church as a whole. Other volumes have been issued by the Institute, a list of which is given below:

- Church and Community Survey of Salem County, N. J.*
- Church and Community Survey of Pend Oreille County, Washington.*
- Church and Community Survey of Sedgwick County, Kansas.*
- Church Life in the Rural South.*
- The Old and New Immigrant on the Land.*
- Rural Church Life in the Middle West.*
- The Country Church in Colonial Counties.*
- Irrigation and Religion: A Study of two prosperous California Counties.*
- The Church on the Changing Frontier.*
- The Country Church in Industrial Zones.*

Suppose we turn back now, and look again at the summary of facts about the rural church in the United States, with which this chapter began: 55,000,000 rural citizens—40,000,000 of them with no vital church attachment—whole classes such as the tenants, the migrant workers, and the Mexicans, shamefully neglected—leaders poorly trained and inadequately prepared—4,000,000 children among them, future American citizens, growing up without a knowledge that Christ wants them to come unto Him—all this in *Christian America*. Surely to our Church, to every religious organization in this country, this situation is a challenge to make good our privilege of professing and calling ourselves Christians.

CHAPTER IV

THE CHURCH'S OPPORTUNITY IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

OUR greatest opportunities are often to be found where we have made our most conspicuous failures. If one were to seek for the outstanding cause of the comparative failure of the Churches in rural America, it would be found in the fact that these Churches have not served their people in all the needs of life. They have failed in their duty to the communities.

Through this failure of the Churches it came about that the communities failed to understand that the same Christ whom they had worshipped on Sunday in the white church in the grove, was to be found all seven days in the week among the poor and needy, the sick and afflicted. It was not heard in their gospel that the soil from which they drew the answer to their insistent prayer, "Give us this day our daily bread," was a Holy Earth, entrusted to them with all of its richness, by a good God, in order that they might hand it on, as fertile as they had received it, to others yet to come. They did not interpret the beauty that was in the heart of Him who clothed the grass of the field, and made the outgoings of the morning and the evening to praise Him. The tenderness that knew the sparrow's fall, and made safe homes for the foxes and birds, was somehow lost in the rigor of hard work. That God meant people to be happy, and little children to play, was doubtful, at best. That they were "all members, one of another," and that the strong

owed any particular duty to the weak, was not a guiding principle of action as each sought his own advantage, under the stimulus of what was conceived to be his right of independence. So much for the people. Meantime the country pastor had powerfully condemned sin as he interpreted it; dutifully he had visited the sick—who never should have been sick; lovingly he had comforted the bereaved—who should not have been untimely bereft. Sincerely religious he may have been, but it may be questioned whether he often reached the foundations of his task, or understood the bearing of his Master's social gospel.

So today, the Church looks beyond the welfare of the individual soul to service in all the complex relations of life as she seeks to make His Way known unto the people. In matters of health, of recreation, of education, of community welfare, of the home; in every aspect, the Church must interpret her Master's understanding of life. It displaces none of the old truth, only adds a new emphasis.

And the pathos of the matter is that, while the rural church was still living within the old limits, there was a new wine of life abroad in the communities. Progress everywhere. New problems. New opportunities for service. And when the Church failed to respond, she lost the allegiance of millions. Her failure to serve the communities, lost for her the loyalty of the greater part of these communities. It brings us back to our first contention: that the way for the rural church to find her strength again is in wholehearted, unselfish service to the community—body, mind, and spirit.

Now much of what has been said is no more true of the country church than of the city church. But it

is more conspicuously true. For in the city there are so many agencies for welfare work, so many civic enterprises for the good of the citizens, such numbers of hospitals, good schools, and the like, that the needs of the people, if they exist to any great extent, are quickly met. In many country districts on the other hand, and particularly in the East and the South, social and welfare organizations are almost entirely lacking.

The situation with the country church, in this respect, is not unlike that which faced the large city churches about fifty years ago; when, after preaching the social ideals of Jesus, they had to provide the means whereby their people might be "doers of the word and not hearers only." Today, owing to the example set by the Churches, and the power that lies in the social gospel, these ministries to the minds and bodies of people are, for the most part, provided for by the State and City governments.

But, as yet, this is not so in most country communities. The country church, therefore, not only has to energize the spirits of its people with the desire to do this service, but it also has to provide the means and lead the way. Thus one successful country missionary reports himself as priest, teacher, fire-chief, Red Cross chairman, physician, etc.; while his wife is secretary, parish visitor, nurse, and organizer. In this whole-hearted service to the community because all the people in it are God's children and need God in all parts of their life—in such service lies our immediate duty.

That this is the conclusion of leaders in all parts of the Church, is witnessed to by such statements as the following:

"Since the development of the rural parish is conditioned by whatever affects rural life, the Bureau is concerned with the entire range of rural problems, and undertakes to show how the parish and similar organizations may take part in the solution of these problems."*

† The country church must be made the vital center of the life of the community, and held responsible to spiritualize both its own departmental life and also the organized agencies of the community."†

"*Resolved*, The House of Bishops concurring, that General Convention calls the attention of the whole Church to the nation-wide importance of the work of the Church in Rural Sections, that the Church may more successfully labour to plant the Kingdom of God in our Rural Fields, and be it further

"*Resolved*, The House of Bishops concurring, that this General Convention urge upon all diocesan authorities the fundamental value of

1. Spreading the Church in rural America.
2. Promoting the prestige of rural Church work.
3. Establishing and holding diocesan, regional, and national conferences for rural clergy.
4. Raising the standard of salaries for the rural clergy.
5. Placing rural work training courses in the curricula of our seminaries; and be it further

"*Resolved*, The House of Bishops concurring, that General Convention recommends to the Provinces that

* Father E. T. O'Hara, Director of the Rural Life Bureau of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference.

† From a statement of Principles adopted at a joint meeting of a committee on the Rural Church appointed by the Board of Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and a like committee appointed by the Department of Rural Church of the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension.

they consider the advisability of establishing Rural Work commissions; and be it further

“Resolved, That the President of this House appoint a standing Committee on Rural Work, consisting of three presbyters and three lawmen, to whom shall be referred all matters introduced in this House relating to the Rural Work of the Church.*

RURAL HEALTH

The Situation

First, some authoritative statements on this subject.

During the last decade, significant facts about the health of country people have been coming to light. Although the percentage of rejections among recently drafted soldiers was somewhat in favor of the rural over the urban recruits, experience in army camps led the medical officers to believe that men from the country districts are a good deal less resistant to contagious diseases than are the city-bred.

The school population offers further evidence: rural school children in the United States make a distinctly worse showing than urban pupils. In this connection, a recent report of a joint committee of the American Public Health Association and of the American Medical Association states that, in Louisiana, a comparative study was made of the children of a town high school and the pupils in a rural school. Of the former, 2½ percent gave evidence of malnutrition; of the latter, 52 percent. Twenty percent of the city children suffer from anæmia, as compared with 51 percent of the country pupils. The percentage, with respect to

* From Report of General Convention, New Orleans, 1925.

eye defects, is 5 to 58 in favor of the city. While only 10 percent of the country boys and girls use tooth-brushes, 89 percent of the city children give their teeth reasonable care.

The rural sickness-rate probably exceeds that of the city. It is believed that there is a lower degree of vitality in the country, in view of the fact that the rural population is more subject to crippling diseases like malaria, hookworm, constipation, adenoids, infected tonsils, and defective teeth. It is true that the rural death rate generally falls below the urban, but it is significant that during recent decades the city death rate has been steadily reduced, while the rural rate has only slightly declined. As a matter of fact, with respect to certain diseases like typhoid, the country often suffers more than the city. In Indiana, for example, the typhoid death rate in cities is 27.5 per 1000; in the country 31.5. The figures for Tennessee are 29.1 and 40.1 respectively. Tuberculosis is a disease which, in spite of the fresh air of the open country, is almost as prevalent there as in the crowded city. Infant mortality, in many cases, is higher in the rural than in the urban areas. A recent survey in Westchester County, N. Y., showed that the rate for cities per thousand was 82, for villages 80, while in the strictly rural regions it rose to 104.

In an investigation for the State of Ohio, it was shown that, for the larger towns and cities, there was one physician for 541 people; while in places of 2,500 and under, there was only one for every 1,600.

"The city baby has four times as good a chance to attain the age of one month as the country baby. The city mother, too, even in the slums, has twice as good

a chance of surviving the dangers of child-birth as the rural mother. This is because the city woman is supervised before, during, and after the birth of a child.*

In a series of articles on "The Honest-to-Goodness American Child, beginning in *Hygeia* for January, Dr. Frances Sage Bradley makes a plea for better health opportunities for the country child. She points out that three-fifths of our children are born in the mountains, on the plains, down in the swamps and deltas, cut off by obstacles mechanical, social, and economic from those sources of relief that are freely available to the child of the city.

She further declares that, although our last frontier has vanished, many babies are being born and reared under pioneer conditions. She tells of a mother and her baby who live out on the plains in a county of 5,500 square miles. There is not a telephone in the county; the nearest neighbor is 40 miles, and the nearest doctor 100 miles, away. But let Dr. Bradley speak for herself:

"A country visitor to the tenement district of any of our large cities might feel that all the children in the world are herded there. He would thank God that his children are spared the confusion, congestion, and temptations of the slums. Likewise the city man, after a few days in the country, would be overwhelmed by its isolation and lack of human relationships; by its inconveniences and lack of opportunities for the best development of his children. He would return to the city, grateful to escape the penalties of rural life. Both

* Article from *Hygeia*, published by The American Medical Association.

men are right, and both are wrong. Neither knows what is happening to the child of the other, and neither concerns himself to find out if, in the great game of life, his silent partner is getting a square deal.

"Let us recognize the fact that the honest-to-goodness American child is a country child, and that his name is legion; that his coming and going are largely a matter of chance and tradition, though upon his integrity depends the integrity of the nation. It is believed that the knowledge and skill acquired in the laboratory of the city, if applied to the needs of the silent country citizen, will produce a nation the like of which the world has never seen."

The following letter was received by the Secretary of the American Country Life Association:

"I know of three mothers in this community who have given birth to babies in the last month. None of them had a doctor. There isn't one in a 25-mile radius. Only one of them had a midwife, and not one of them had sufficient clothing for her baby. I cannot imagine any greater need for help than that of these mothers, but it was not forthcoming. Every paper one reads has pages devoted to the declining birth rate in the United States. If some money were spent in helping to pay doctor bills, buy clothes, and pay for someone to do the work while the mother was not able to do for herself, I would venture to say that the birth rate would soon be climbing instead of declining. I speak from knowledge—not guess work. No sensible mother is going to risk her life and risk leaving the children she already has motherless, if it is possible to do otherwise, and that is just what giving birth to

a child means in a place like this. I, myself, am a young woman only 29 years old, and in less than two months will give birth to my sixth child. I know that a doctor is an impossibility, and that even an inexperienced midwife cannot be had, and even if they could there is no money to pay them. I have never asked for help, but surely I need it. I haven't a shred of clothing for my expected baby; and the children I already have, haven't enough to wear to be presentable away from home. I have thought about my bright beautiful children having to go without even the necessities of life, until I fear I am getting bitter about it. Surely there is some one who has enough clothing to spare to clothe my children so they might go to school and Sunday school. I have a boy 11 years and two girls of five and three years. I lost two from not being able to procure a doctor."

Such evidence as this might be multiplied endlessly. Anyone who knows country life can witness to the undernourished children, the suffering women, the unsanitary homes and many an other situation that the Great Physician would have us remedy. Health and morality, sanitation and sanctity, are too closely allied in this material world of ours for the Church to feel that this important part of human life is, in any sense, alien to its ministry.

Ways of Meeting the Situation

The actual method by which a church in a country community will seek to meet the rural health situation will, of course, depend on the local conditions. In the more isolated communities, this will at times take the nature of:

(1) Providing Hospital Facilities

Certain sections of our country back in the hills and mountains, away from cities and towns, miles off from any railroad, have person after person who is doomed to years of suffering or an early death because of lack of surgical attention. It is a happy privilege for the country minister to be able to carry crippled children to city hospitals where the surgeons may lay their hands on them and heal them. And when they come home again, stronger and straighter, there is a happiness in their faces and a look in their parents' eyes that makes one realize that only by working with the Master could such good things be done.

In one southern State, the Executive Secretary of the Social Service Committee has repeatedly thrown out to every clergyman therein the challenge: "If there is a single man, woman or child in your community who needs hospital treatment and isn't getting it, then it is your fault—your responsibility." For he has worked out the following scheme: First, he has gotten in touch with the charitable facilities which the State and private hospitals provide. Also he has secured the promise of help from many of the leading surgeons and doctors in the city. Then in the city where he lives, and in other cities of the State, he has organized hospital committees of women who visit any sick he may ask them to, meet trains, take the convalescents out riding, and do any other reasonable service that may be required. Further, he is able to secure "charity passes" from the railroads for needy cases.

From some distant parish comes a message that the local doctor has asked help in the case of an adult who

needs an immediate operation, or has found some crippled children. There is no money in the families where the sick are—"can you help?" In a few hours comes the answer that the railroad passes have been mailed, and that the committee at the town where the change of trains has to be made has been notified to be on hand to help. The patient will be met at the station when the train arrives in the city, and arrangements have been made with the hospital to take care of the case, and Dr. So-and-so has promised to take it in hand. There is not much else to be done, except to quiet the fears of those back home who never have had a member of their family operated on, and then to put the patient on the train. It is just one way, in a busy and complicated, yet kind-hearted, social order, to use the power of the Church to fulfill Christ's command, "Heal the sick."*

(2) Coöperating with Health Agencies

It is perhaps true that communities where this form of service is needed are exceptional and, fortunately, are becoming rarer. The more typical rural health situation is one where there are at hand helpful agencies ready to work both for curative and preventive medicine and sanitation; and the problem is to inspire and organize the community that it may take advantage of the facilities offered by the National, State and local governments, looking towards better health conditions.

Through the cordial coöperation of the Public Health Service of the United States Government and the various State Health Commissions with the local com-

* The details of this plan can be secured from the Rev. R. C. Montague, Box 1274, Richmond, Virginia.

munities, it is now possible for any county to put on a full program of public health work, the greater part of the expense of which will be borne by the State and National governments. Ideally, this would call for a local staff consisting of a health officer, a sanitary officer, a nurse, and a secretary. Actually, few counties are willing yet to invest so much in good health, and a county or district nurse and a local health or sanitary officer are all that can be expected. But the value of having even one person primarily interested in public health is, that it puts the community in touch with the clinical facilities which all States offer. Through this plan, experts can be brought into any community where sufficient preparation has been made to hold free clinics. The value of such clinics to a rural community cannot be estimated, and often all that is needed to bring them about is the intelligent coöperation of some one person or group of persons locally with the State health authorities. What a chance for a Christian minister or layman or church to make effective the healing and life-giving power of Christianity!

Practically, the thing for one to do who desires to help in this respect, is to write the State Board of Health, inquire what is being done and what ought to be done for public health in that particular community; and offer to be the local means of bringing together the bad community conditions and the remedy which the State offers.

In the same way, the Red Cross, the National Tuberculosis Association, and other great health organizations, need a community leader to make their helpful plans locally effective.

And, finally, while the clergyman should never make the mistake of trying to supplant a doctor, yet, in the field of preventive medicine, in the research work that is being done along these lines by the great Health Institutes, it may well be that the wide-awake minister will be the first to call the attention of the local health officers to the great advances that are being made in this particular. After all, preventing sickness is more naturally the social worker's field than the practising physician's. One's attitude might be defined by the warning, "Be an intelligent citizen, but not a quack doctor."

RURAL PUBLIC WELFARE

Under this head may be considered community problems involving jails and almshouses, dependency and delinquency, and all other similar unfortunate conditions, the cure of which should be of concern to Christian people.

Jails and Almshouses

The condition of many rural jails and almshouses beggars description.

The Rev. C. N. Lathrop, Executive Secretary of the National Department of Christian Social Service, in a pamphlet, *A Practical Program for Church Groups in Jail Work*, quotes as follows from the record of a prison inspector about conditions in the county jails of a Mid-West State:

"There are approximately 115 county jails in the State, and, of these, at least a hundred reek with the odors of leaky plumbing, or, what is far worse, with

odors that result from having almost no plumbing. Almost without exception, from one end of the State to the other, they are unspeakably dirty and unsanitary, swarming with vermin, frightfully overcrowded, and generally so atrocious that it is hard to believe that they are meant to house human beings. Classification of any kind, except of the sexes and of the Negro and white races, is an unheard of thing. Cells are dark, unsanitary and unfit for anyone to live in. Therefore, it is the rule to permit all prisoners to mingle freely in the open spaces between cells. Not long ago I visited a jail in one of the wealthiest counties of the State, where eighteen prisoners were occupying three cells; and near these, in a corner of the cell, was an insane prisoner who had been confined five days. Of the eighteen prisoners, six were boys under the age of eighteen. Black and white, sick and well, the prisoners awaiting trial, were all crowded together. The cells were so dark that I stumbled over two boys lying on the floor. They were in the same cell with a sick man; but a few days before, a man had died there with pneumonia, presumably contracted in the jail. Under such conditions these prisoners had lived for weeks, with an air-space of 67 cubic feet that should have been 500."

Similar conditions, if not worse, exist in many almshouses. Instances could be multiplied where, not only are the inmates, while living, kept under most distressing physical and moral conditions, but even after death they are buried with no semblance of a religious service. And do the country churches care greatly?

The inspector of almshouses in one of our States where the Episcopal Church is particularly strong,

writes: "There are 80 almshouses in the State. For a period of a whole year, 65 of these went without a religious service. Also from these almshouses there were burials without funeral rites of any kind throughout the State."

Surely, it takes but one reading of our Lord's parable of the Great Judgment to remind Christian people of their specific duty to those who are in prison—and those who are poor and in want. Who else can see that these things are properly done except those who are moved by the Spirit of Christ?

Juvenile Dependency and Delinquency

As to the children—the dependents, the delinquents in rural communities—how many of them are there? Where do they come from? What becomes of them? These questions have been partly answered by a study made in the State of West Virginia by the National Child Labor Committee where conditions were found that may be taken as typical of many other places. With approximately 500,000 rural children under 20 years of age, 5 percent, or 25,000, were estimated to be dependent upon others than their parents. We quote their report:*

"Among factors contributing to rural dependency, are sickness, ignorance, inefficiency, mismanagement, mental deficiency, licentiousness, brutality, immorality, poverty, accident, death, divorce, and desertion. Homes are broken; children become dependent on others than their own parents. Unofficially without the law, they are placed in homes of relatives, neighbors, friends, strangers, and in institutions. They are placed on

* *Rural Child Welfare*. The Macmillan Co., New York.

agreement, on private contract, or for accommodation, by a parent, relative, physician, hospital, Salvation Army, mission, justice of the peace, probation officer, police matron, clubwoman, or private citizen. Officially within the law, they are placed by the county court in almshouses, in each instance in the same quarters occupied by old men and women and mentally deficient inmates; in family homes; under care of guardians; and are bound out. Law protects property rights, but does not always protect human rights. Guardians usually guard and account for money, and ignore children. Officially, the circuit court makes children wards of the State when physically and mentally sound, and legally subject to placement in foster homes. Out of 270 children from broken homes, less than 25 percent have been reached by any responsible authority such as the court, probation officer, State agent, private home-finding society, orphanage, or any official, public or private. Forty-six percent have lost both parents through death. The largest number of orphans are in foster homes; the largest number with one or both parents living are in hit-or-miss homes; many are tramp children, drifting from place to place without permanent care. The largest number partially supported by a parent are with relatives. The largest number of those whose mothers have deserted, remarried, or who for any reason fail to keep in touch with them, are received into foster homes; while most of the children whose fathers have deserted or fail to keep in touch with them, are in hit-or-miss homes with no plan for permanent care. Twenty-two percent of the children in foster homes, with a living parent, know nothing of the parent's whereabouts. The largest num-

ber of children not akin are found in the prosperous farms. The largest number over 16 years are found in foster homes.

"Dependent children are not receiving the minimum education provided as required by law in their localities. Those in foster-homes attend more regularly than those who are with relatives or in hit-or-miss homes. In the case of dependent children of compulsory-attendance age, 7 percent of those with relatives, 4 percent of those in foster-homes, and 38 percent of those in hit-or-miss homes are not attending school at all. Children are placed in farm-homes varying in size from the ancestral farm of 300 acres to the half-acre patch; whose houses vary from the furnace-and-bath type to the one-room log cabin with lean-to kitchen, or the isolated tumbledown shack without a window and without a floor. Approximately one-third of the homes have no toilet facilities. One-third of the married couples caring for dependent children are classed as "aged," as are also two-thirds of the widows doing so. More than half, or 57 percent, of the homes provide some kind of reading matter, while 43 percent have nothing of the kind, nor is anything available through traveling library or the school."

In fairness to the kind-heartedness of country people, however, it must be remembered that many a foster home proves a godsend to the child. In countless instances, children so placed receive the best care that their foster parents are able to provide. Many a dependent child from the city, placed in such a family by the proper authorities, finds a happy home.

In regard to child delinquency in rural sections, the problem is to have them treated as delinquents and not

as criminals; to see that they have proper corrective training, not herded into county jails with hardened offenders. This, of course, is a matter of State law, technically; but in many communities the proper operation of juvenile courts waits upon the intelligent coöperation of someone to serve as probation officer, or some group of citizens who care enough for children to see to it that, when the State does provide laws for their training and probation these laws are effectively carried out.

The hopeful side of this picture is that many States have advanced in social legislation and practice to a point where such conditions do not generally exist, except in isolated cases; and that many more have at last, and still more are in the process of getting, the necessary legislation. But the change will, in many cases, be dependent upon the voluntary response that the Christian social conscience of the community makes. It must be remembered that whereas, in the city, court officials of all kinds are paid, and so court procedure goes along smoothly; in many country places, in this newer kind of social operation, the executives are volunteers. What better chance could any Christian minister or layman want than to serve as a volunteer probation officer in a rural community?

It must, of course, be borne in mind that here, as in all rural social work, the needs of the community and the opportunities offered by the appropriate State Board to remedy any bad situation that may be found, must be known before any intelligent step to remedy the situation can be taken by either an individual or a church.

RURAL EDUCATION

There is no field of social endeavor in America upon which so much thought and money is expended as upon education. We take this, however, to emphasize the *importance* of our educational system rather than its *perfection*.

In the country districts, there is a more intimate relation between the home and the school than in large communities. Parent-teachers' associations are often the strongest social agency in a rural community; and from the agricultural and domestic science branches of rural high schools the extension service reaches into many a farm-yard and home.

But still, rural education needs all the help it can get from every citizen and every group of them. The consolidated schools, with good equipment and teachers, are not yet in the majority. There were still, in 1921, no less than 175,000 one-teacher public schools in the United States and 12,000 two-teacher schools, as against 15,000 of consolidated type. Rural educators are turning more and more to an emphasis upon compulsory rural school attendance for the control of rural child-labor; yet the law is but poorly enforced, due to the indifference or opposition of the parents. Has the Church no word to say here? In the United States as a whole, the country child has a term shorter by 36 days (nearly two school months) than has the city child. Surely, here again is a matter of supreme importance to those who teach that we should worship the Lord with all the mind.

In many States, where the law permits it, there is a very special obligation on the Christian forces of a

community to see that such courses in religious instruction as are permitted, are given in the school. Sometimes the duty will fall on the minister; sometimes a lay-person can and will do it. Or, again, a member of the regular school faculty, in a spare period, can be gotten to give the course, suitable remuneration being provided by the local churches. The use of Week-Day Religious Instruction, and the Daily Vacation Bible Schools, though not widely developed yet in rural sections, is full of promise, and waits upon intelligent community leadership to be successfully employed.

RURAL RECREATION

How the country folk of America, particularly in the South, need it! To many country communities, the spirit of play is the spirit of the devil. "I don't believe in so much of this 'ere base-ball," remarked one old farmer, speaking of a basketball game. "Children now-a-days is all run mad to play." "I never played when I was a boy." "I don't believe in play." Answers like these were received many times over by members of the National Child Labor Committee in their investigation of rural conditions. It is not all the country person's fault. To one who has never had the opportunity to play, naturally it appears to be a waste of time. But how they do love it when once they forget themselves and "loosen up"! In many cases, they touch a realm of experience almost unknown. They laugh at themselves and at their neighbors. "Who would ever thought to see old Mandy Bowers a-cutting up so"! They see themselves and their neighbors in a new light. "In religion a man sees God; in play he finds his fellow."

"On its sociable side," concludes one writer on this subject, "play is needed in the country to promote acquaintance and friendship, to relieve monotony, to counteract the materialism that grows up in an atmosphere of all work and no play, to destroy isolation and the separateness of man from man—what we often call the individualism of the American farmer, something that is vastly different from individuality.

"The country needs play and recreation as a means of enriching country life and enhancing its holding power. It needs fun and entertainment, athletic games and sports, occasions of social mixing and enjoyment, for the satisfaction of the normal and wholesome human hungers and desires that express themselves in play and recreation. The barrenness of social and recreational life in many rural communities, is one reason for the great exodus of young people to the cities.

"Finally, the country needs play and recreation because these are the right of country people. Country people are entitled to equal pleasures and advantages with city people. It is only country people themselves who can establish and maintain the democratic balance between country and city in regard to play, recreation, and sociable life—three important aspects of self-expression and self-expansion."*

And perhaps the Episcopal Church, which is not hampered by specific "don'ts" in regard to such matters, can find a unique opportunity in many a socially starved community to bring to old and young a happiness in life and a re-creation of its powers that will make the rest of the way seem brighter.

* *Rural Child Welfare*, pages 161-164.

THE RURAL HOME

Here, again what a variety of conditions we have in rural America! There are still places where the country home, with a fine balance between parental control and childhood happiness, with an equal measure of culture and Christianity, with the discipline and pleasure that come from a large family group, furnishes a happy ideal. But where the Churches have failed in their duty to the rural home, has not been with homes of this type; but rather with those whose opportunities all along the way of life have been so limited.

The problem of the rural home assumes still greater importance when we know of the proportional relation of the country home to the number of children in the United States. There are about 30,000,000 persons in each of the two great population-groups, i. e., the cities over 100,000, and the open country districts. And yet there are estimated to be 4,000,000 more children in the open country than in the city group. And in the next place, the country children are not in equal proportion in all homes, whether owner or tenant, for studies have shown that owner-couples have an average of 2.87 children per family, while tenant-couples have 3.71 children per family. This means that the country home averages more children per family than the city home, and that in the country homes a larger proportion of children is found in the class of homes that have the most limited opportunities for enrichment.

It is hardly necessary to go into any detail in regard to the conditions of the rural home of the average type. The lack of sanitary conveniences; of heat, light,

and water, in the home; the crowded sleeping quarters; the insufficient and poorly prepared food; the lack of reading matter; the dreary discipline of exacting chores; an almost total absence of means of recreation—these and other limitations which come as much from lack of knowledge and imagination, as from the restrictions of poverty, all combine to make the rural home a place that ministers only grudgingly to the necessities of the body, and not at all to the mind and spirit.

Yet, through it all there runs such insistent manifestations of the fact that these people are meant for better things, as to make one hopeful, rather than despairing. The love of parents and children, the faithfulness of husband and wife, the kindness of those in trouble, a quick and generous sympathy for those in need, show that what is keeping these people from better things is the unfortunate stress of material circumstance rather than any inherent mental or spiritual insufficiency.

Here, then, is a job for the country church to consider; to take this rural home, where life begins and spends its most important years; to throw about it the safeguards of sanitation; to bring in the knowledge of more comfortable ways of living and better methods of working; to enrich its mental attitude with something beyond that which is furnished by the local paper and the farm journal; and to lead its members to where they may, at least, look over into the wonderland of art and music and literature. Whole realms of beauty and knowledge are closed to them because there is no one to open the eye, to train the ear, or to inspire the mind to take in the wonders all about us, and to share

in the triumphs of mind and spirit of all the ages. "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly," is the announcement of Jesus Christ.

In a recent study made by the United States Department of Agriculture, Dr. E. L. Kirkpatrick analyzes the incomes of farmers, and the way these incomes were spent. Among other items such as food, clothing, etc., he has one called "advancement," which includes the amount spent on education, reading matter, organization dues, contributions to religious organizations, Red Cross and welfare work, and recreation. With families where the total of all goods used was less than \$600, 1.9 percent went for "advancement." Where the total income rose to \$2,700, 12.2 percent went for this item. Evidently, it is the poorer home where there are the most children which needs the Church's help the most in its pathetic and oftentimes embarrassed attempt for mental and spiritual environment.

RURAL ECONOMIC NEEDS

The figures given just above serve to illustrate how the correction of many of the social difficulties of rural life must wait upon a more promising economic situation. Hence, the economic condition of a community has much more than a material significance, and the Church should take the lead in interpreting and training the spiritual values involved. But with how great care! The average church leader, even though he be a seminary graduate, is generally a poor economist, and a poorer farmer. There is no place in rural life where silence will bring such golden reward as here. Silence, however, and not inaction. For the County, State, and

National governments have men who can help in local economic situations. The wise rural leader will be he who, understanding something of the problem, brings into the community agricultural and economic experts. To them he may well be content to leave whatever glory may come from their helpful advice, or whatever opprobrium may result from their failures. The position of the Church in a rural community should never be too closely knit to any particular economic scheme. But, for the material advancement of the farmer, the Church should have great concern, because of the spiritual implications.

In this chapter, there have been presented some of the more important phases of rural life in which the Church may find a glorious opportunity for work, and may render a community service of a very intimate and spiritual value to every member therein.

Of course it is only part of the story. It is not meant to be the whole work of the Church. In addition to these suggestions of social action, the country people need, as much as do the city folk, the full measure of what the Church has to give in worship, in teaching, in evangelization, and in the administration of the Sacraments. Indeed, without this, how inadequate is all the rest! For it is just as easy in a country mission as in an established parish to fritter away the available religious content of a group on social misadventures, unless there is an abiding reality and an unseen power back of it all. But with the spirit of Christ to guide us, and His power to strengthen us, the field of rural community service offers a glorious opportunity for unselfish life-renewing work.

CHAPTER V

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH AND RURAL WORK

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH ONCE A RURAL CHURCH

THE Episcopal Church began in America as a country institution. For this it deserves no great credit, since, if it was to begin at all, it had to be in the little settlement, with the forest as a background, where the rest of our American civilization had its start.

Then that little settlement multiplied. In its own numbers it increased, and with this increase the Episcopal Church kept pace—a village church—a town church—and then a city church, and many of them.

The original population grew, not alone within itself, but in kind it was multiplied all over the land. As the forest receded, the settlements followed. Across mountains, upon the broad plains, over mountains again—until stopped by the Pacific, these pioneer communities grew in number and in size.

What became of the Episcopal Church? These pioneers were not irreligious. Where, then, was their old Church? With some, the hope was that they had left it behind forever in England; for they had had enough of it and its coldness, and wanted their own way of worshiping God. Others, to whom this estrangement from the established order had never come, hoped longingly, as they pressed on into new lands, to see their Church follow. In too many cases, however, they looked in vain. It was not long before the energies of

the Church were so engaged in the struggle for self-preservation following the Revolutionary War, that little could be given to send out missionaries along the expanding frontier. Thus, while the settlement of the country beyond the Alleghenies was developing most rapidly, the Episcopal Church was least able to put forth missionary effort. Partly, then, because it could not do otherwise, and partly because there was lacking a unified sense of responsibility, the Episcopal Church was relatively inactive in its missionary work in this country at the very time when great sections of the country were being settled by American stock, and claimed by other religious bodies.

HER BEGINNINGS IN WESTERN CITIES AND IN MISSIONARY FIELDS

That the Episcopal Church was inactive is true only in a relative sense. As members of the Church went westward, they carried with them the love of the Church, and here and there in settlements that were soon to be towns and cities, groups of Church people drew together and founded what today are strong city parishes. It was in the smaller places, and in the open country, that we were left virtually without witness.

Back East, however, in spite of difficulties, the Church grew in the city and in many places in the country, too, so that today eastern Dioceses will be found with country parishes that trace a vigorous life back to colonial days. Especially is this true in Maryland and Virginia. It also must be remembered that much of the work of our missionary Dioceses and Districts has been country work. It would be doing much less than justice to such great missionaries as Bishops

Hare, Polk and Tuttle; to DeKoven, Burleson, Breck, Fackler, and many other adventuresome spirits, if we ever forgot that the hold of the Church, such as it is, in the smaller places of the Mid-West and West is due to them.

We must not forget, too, that much of the domestic missionary work of our Church has been done among special classes of persons who are largely rural, such as the Indian, the Mountaineer, the Negro, and the Immigrant, who settles in the country as well as in the city. But each of these special fields has its own advocates.

While the figures given just below take in all communicants of the Episcopal Church—Negroes, Indians and all, the special emphasis of this chapter, as indeed of the whole book, is upon the opportunity and obligation before our Church for increased efforts among the native white people of rural districts.

THE PRESENT FACTS

Using the Government census figure of 2,500 as the dividing line between "urban" and "rural," one-half of the people of the United States live in the country, the other half in the city. Of the 52,000,000 in the cities, 924,468 are communicants of the Episcopal Church. Of the 52,000,000 in the country, 191,775 are communicants. Eighty-three percent of the communicant strength of the Church is in the cities and towns; 17 percent in the villages and open country.

Judging by these figures, if it had been left to the Episcopal Church to Christianize rural America, it would be proportionately less Christian today than the Japanese Empire.

In Japan, one out of every 250 is a member of some Christian body.

In the United States, the Episcopal Church has reached only one out of every 280 persons in rural districts.

In Iowa, the proportion is one Episcopalian to every 6,464 of the country population.

It isn't to be wondered at that a certain Mid-Westerner, when asked where President Wilson was buried, replied: "In the Presbyterian Cathedral in Washington." There are thousands of them that have never heard of the Episcopal Church, millions to whom it is but a name.

The following table gives the total number of communicants and of rural communicants by Dioceses:

TABLE II

<i>Diocese</i>	<i>Total Com- muni- cants</i>	<i>Rural Com- muni- cants</i>	<i>Diocese</i>	<i>Total Com- muni- cants</i>	<i>Rural Com- muni- cants</i>
Alabama	9,378	1,983	Long Island	44,628	11,510
Albany	26,980	8,071	Los Angeles	16,944	1,231
Arizona	2,842	543	Louisiana	12,053	1,057
Arkansas	5,256	892	Maine	6,584	1,542
Atlanta	6,684	471	Marquette	3,603	911
Bethlehem	16,629	1,677	Maryland	29,243	5,972
California	11,982	763	Massachusetts	59,937	2,504
Central New York ..	27,774	7,331	Michigan	21,445	2,634
Chicago	32,681	1,474	Milwaukee	12,243	1,682
Colorado	8,479	1,795	Minnesota	16,208	2,021
Connecticut	51,103	17,247	Mississippi	6,449	4,618
Dallas	6,017	243	Missouri	8,280	691
Delaware	4,473	1,414	Montana	4,520	1,418
Duluth	3,838	1,273	Nebraska	5,545	1,224
East Carolina	5,867	2,705	Nevada	1,138	714
Eastern Oregon ...	1,708	938	Newark	49,142	5,818
Easton	3,679	2,520	New Hampshire ...	6,281	2,025
Erie	7,974	1,076	New Jersey	29,570	7,657
Florida	5,753	870	New Mexico	2,801	730
Fond du Lac	5,942	1,377	New York	92,985	6,241
Georgia	5,557	677	North Carolina ...	10,005	2,228
Harrisburg	12,244	2,222	North Dakota	2,440	955
Idaho	2,817	1,083	Northern Indiana..	4,592	619
Indianapolis	4,405	133	North Texas	932	161
Iowa	8,660	238	Ohio	29,501	1,136
Kansas	6,211	943	Oklahoma	4,265	432
Kentucky	6,435	593	Olympia	7,776	409
Lexington	2,927	302	Oregon	4,456	731

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<i>Diocese</i>	<i>Total Com- muni- cants</i>	<i>Rural Com- muni- cants</i>	<i>Diocese</i>	<i>Total Com- muni- cants</i>	<i>Rural Com- muni- cants</i>
Pennsylvania	67,228	9,161	Texas	8,607	2,285
Pittsburgh	18,659	542	Upper So. Carolina	5,036	995
Quincy	3,373	1,055	Utah	1,418	235
Rhode Island	21,629	4,278	Vermont	6,186	3,501
Sacramento	3,419	966	Virginia	18,560	8,304
Salina	1,192	473	Washington	24,070	2,198
San Joaquin	2,513	319	Western Mass.	15,271	1,418
South Carolina	7,882	2,294	Western Michigan..	7,262	551
South Dakota	8,751	5,581	West Missouri	5,046	276
South Florida	7,983	2,160	Western Nebraska .	2,300	1,107
Southern Ohio	15,308	518	Western New York..	34,545	3,840
Southern Virginia..	13,540	5,323	Western N. Carolina	3,891	1,761
Southwestern Va...	5,963	1,788	West Texas	4,784	1,068
Spokane	2,984	1,148	West Virginia	7,436	1,308
Springfield	3,928	674	Wyoming	3,451	1,364
Tennessee	10,587	1,082			

SOME REASONS FOR THIS CONDITION

Why does this condition exist? Our Church was first with the founders of our country; she has been far from first in carrying Christianity to the Nation.

Evidently there are many reasons. Some have existed in the past, and left us only their unfortunate results; it would be out of place and valueless to discuss them here. There are, however, other reasons which are factors in the situation as it now is, and which must be considered in any study of the problem and in every attempt to find its solution.

First, the lack of a sense of community responsibility

This has been emphasized in Chapter IV. It is a fault common to all religious bodies in their rural work, but seemingly exaggerated in much of the small-town and rural work of the Episcopal Church. It is pathetic to find the number of such places where the priest is content to minister once or twice a week to a small group of Episcopalians, and makes little or no attempt

to apply to the urgent problems of the community the real power of the Church and the expression of its corporate spirit of Christian service.

Secondly, the lack of a suitable method

The Church as a whole has failed to develop a technique and spirit that is suited to the understanding and needs of a simple-hearted and, to some degree, an uneducated people. Too much our methods, not our message, have been super-imposed; they have not been indigenous. Perhaps this is almost unavoidable in a Church with an ecclesiastical organization such as ours; but it has some unfortunate results when we try to reach unchurched millions. This has manifested itself variously; we see it markedly in the failure to develop local lay-leadership. A mission point, or small parish becomes vacant. The tendency is to wait for the Bishop or Archdeacon to come and look over the situation, and finally send in a man, hoping that he may meet the needs of the work. Too often, during this interval, services are discontinued, the Sunday school goes to seed, and things generally become disorganized, waiting for a leader to be sent by some one higher up. And all the time there are splendid potentialities of Christian leadership in the men and women right on the spot. The Church must find a way to enlist these resources in her service.

We see it again in the failure of the Church to have a feasible method and understandable message for rural evangelism. Whatever may be true of the power of the pulpit in American cities, in the country districts there never was a time when the need and opportunity

for spiritual preaching was so great. Farm life is assimilating, at a rapid rate, the teachings of science today. Agriculture is becoming scientific. Unless the Church can spiritualize this knowledge, it will lose whole groups of our people whose conceptions of God and His way of working are rapidly being changed. The rural districts need evangelism of the mind and soul. The Episcopal Church has been conspicuous in her failure to speak as her Master did, so that the common people may hear her gladly. In this failure, she has lost a Christ-like attribute.

To a certain extent, is not this same general condition true of our forms of worship? The Prayer Book services are the result of the spiritual experience and aspiration of hundreds of generations of Christian people. They are tuned to a high spiritual key. Any spirit has to be trained into a full appreciation of them. On the other hand, when once this training is given, there is nothing in them that the simplest mind and heart cannot comprehend. They can become the way of religious expression for the simple as well as for the sage; for the sinner, as well as for the saint. But that training must come. New-born souls do not break forth naturally into Morning or Evening Prayer and the other great services. They must be trained.

Too often we fail to understand the ignorance of, and prejudice against, our forms of worship on the part of the average country person. Thus, instead of being a means of grace, our services may appear to them a mere matter of form; of form that alienates rather than wins these timid, misunderstanding, children of God.

Thirdly, the type of rural clergymen, and the Church's attitude towards them

How splendid, how blessed, have been the lives of many ministers of the Episcopal Church who have labored in the country parishes and missions! They have sought no recognition, nor asked for greater reward than the joy of Christian service. Yet apart from the record of these choice souls, who form the exceptions, it is an outstanding fact that the country parishes have, in all religious bodies, generally been considered as the place for the less gifted, the failures, the young deacons, or the older men who have outlived their usefulness elsewhere. Until this attitude of our Church, and of others, is changed, there is no hope of solving the rural church problem. The country parish needs as high a type of man as the city parish; mediocrity cannot achieve even medium success; the problems are too great, the difficulties too embarrassing.

Our Church, realizing this, must make it psychologically and materially possible for many of its best men to stay in country places. It must pay the laborer a worthy hire, and give honor to whom honor is due. There is no duty of more pressing importance before this Church than that of raising the morale and lengthening the time of service of men in rural and missionary places.

It is interesting to note how, in its foreign missionary work, the Church has shown a degree of statesmanship that has resulted in selecting and sending her very best types there; and has thus, in a measure, avoided the mistakes that today are hindering the rural work in

this country. For her community interest in every phase of life, witness her schools and hospitals, as well as her churches. For her speaking in a language the people can understand, note that a study of the thought and language of the people is required as preliminary to any ministry among people of different language and thought. In America, we have been misled by using the same words in city and country, not realizing the difference in their interpretation.

The honor that our Church has always given to her missionaries working in foreign lands has been as justly bestowed on them as it has been conspicuously withheld from the unromantic worker in the small rural mission.

Other causes have operated in the Church to hold back missionary work both at home and abroad. Lack of interest and information, lack of Christian giving and generosity, parochialism, diocesan selfishness—such causes as these paralyze all missionary endeavor. The rural work bears its share of these hindrances, and then has to add the weight of its particular burdens.

THE SPECIAL CHALLENGE TO OUR CHURCH

It is with a sense of relief that we turn from a consideration of those things that are making it difficult for the Church to do rural work, to see wherein lies our special fitness for such service. For at the points where we are strong, comes the special challenge to use that strength in this cause. We may find ourselves more of one mind in the recital of our virtues than in the search for the reasons of our failure.

The urban-rural antagonism

In the United States, sectionalism is rapidly disappearing, but we are far from being a people united in common interests. While differences between North and South, East and West, are being obliterated, other divisive factors have appeared in our national life. The conflicting interests of capital and labor form a continual menace to the progress of our industrial life. Social and religious groups, drawn together by like-mindedness on some point, press for the advantage of their group, or their idea, as against those of different opinion. Fundamentalists in Texas and New York join against Modernists in New York and Texas. Klan and anti-Klan divide their peculiar field in sharp antithesis. While geographic sectionalism is disappearing; economic, mental, and social sectionalism—*blocs* of one kind or another—are still with us, and are in power to an alarming extent.

Among these is the increasing division between urban and rural interests—socially and economically. It is sometimes an impossibility to get country people to attend a town church because of the lack of sympathetic understanding between the town and country groups. Even further than this does the division between town and country interests grow. In economic affairs and in politics, it is threatening to become one of the great marks of unhappy division in our Nation.

It becomes, then, the duty of the Church, whose interests include all, to do what she can to remedy this situation. The following challenge was recently put to our Church by a national leader, not a member of the Episcopal Church but one whose vision had foreseen

the situation. "The Episcopal Church is predominantly an urban Church. Her message ought to reach many of the leaders of our political and economic life. Can she not interpret to our city people something of the rightful aspirations of the rural folk of America, that there may be created a spirit of greater coöperation between city and country, in place of this rising feeling of class antagonism?"

The Episcopal Church is a great urban Church. This fact opens to her an unexpected opportunity. More and more she is speaking with emphasis about the spiritual interpretation of the problems of capital and labor. Here is vital matter wherein her ability to reach city people peculiarly qualifies her to render to the Nation a unique service. An occasional sermon on rural life given from a city pulpit, would be as refreshing as unique, and could do much to interpret the country to the city.

Not only or chiefly by preaching can this be done; personal service is better. The same observer whose words are quoted above cites the instance of a Philadelphia Churchman who, Sunday by Sunday, went from the city into the country to teach in a mission, and became a leader in that rural community. In smaller cities and towns, the opportunity is especially offered for Church people to go out in sympathetic service on Sundays and other days into rural communities and help create, as a by-product of such service, a spirit of friendliness in place of antagonism.

On the roads leading out from a certain Mid-West city, are signs telling the rural folk that the roads are built and maintained by the merchants of the town for the use of the country people. The fact that the

roads all lead eventually to the merchants' stores does not make the use of them any less appreciated by farmers who, formerly, had to haul their goods to and from town through mud holes. Is not there a lesson here for the urban Episcopal Church?

The need for an educated ministry in the country

In the second chapter of this book, emphasis is laid upon the fact that farming is becoming a scientific occupation. There are few industries where the principles of science must be understood and followed as closely as in this one. Recognizing this, all the States have agricultural colleges where farm boys and girls have been studying the sciences as they apply to this many-sided business. As a result, there are already many leaders in rural communities who have had an education in science, and the number of such trained persons must be constantly increasing.

In past years the farmer was a fatalist. He had to deal with forces which he could not control. Rain and drought, heat and cold, insect and parasite, and many another uncontrollable element had to be met in his struggle for a livelihood. If the drought came, it was God's will. Thus, though the crops might suffer, the farmer's simple faith was unaffected.

Many of these factors he has now learned to control. An epidemic of hog cholera is the occasion for calling the County Farm Agent, rather than a prayer meeting. As to most of his similar difficulties, though he cannot control them, yet he knows much of their more immediate causes. God seems put out of account. The farmer is still largely a fatalist, but without a

personal God; he has learned much more of Science, but little more of God.

A certain Christian country gentleman had a son just out of the agricultural school. He was deeply interested in the little country church nearby and in the work of their minister, and wanted his son to share his interest. Obligated to leave home for a time, he asked his boy to carry on his work at the country church until his return. When he came back he asked his son how things had gone at the little church. "Father," the boy replied, "please don't ask me to go there any more. About all I have heard from the pastor is that the Science I have learned at college is opposed to Christianity and entirely false."

To interpret the scientific knowledge of today which enters so intimately into the farmer's life, so that it will illumine and not darken his faith in God and his understanding of the ways of God, is a task for an educated ministry—men who *know*, who can bring the service of a trained mind to telling their people how near the Spirit of the Creator is to us in all Nature, and who can show how wonderfully and beautifully that Spirit performs its life-giving task. For the thought of his day, the Psalmist did this: "Great is our Lord, and great is His power; yea, and His wisdom is infinite. Who covereth the heaven with clouds, and prepareth rain for the earth; and maketh the grass to grow upon the mountains, and herb for the use of men; who giveth fodder unto the cattle; and feedeth the young ravens that call upon Him." For the fuller knowledge of this generation, the same duty falls upon those who preach the Word.

Are the pastors of the rural churches capable of doing this? In figures recently given out by the Methodist Episcopal Church, and used with their permission, it is shown that there are 3,500 "supplies," most of them in the country churches, who do not average a seventh-grade education. Of the 12,000 ordained pastors in that Church, 3,500 average only a second-year high school education, and another 3,500 average a sophomore education. Over half of their total number of pastors do not average more than a high school academic preparation! Undoubtedly this denomination, together with the Southern Baptist and Southern Methodist Churches, furnish the great majority of country preachers in the United States today. We may say in all charity but without fear of contradiction, that neither the Southern Methodists nor the Baptist Churches reach an average even as high as the figures given above in the matter of the academic training of their ministers. Fundamentalists are largely recruited from among those who do not know the fundamentals of the point of view which they so vigorously oppose. This is true of scientists as well as of preachers. The true interpretation of Science can be given only by those who know sciences, and have felt the thrill of finding new knowledge together with the humility which recognizes that it is all of God. The Episcopal Church carries on today the ideal of an educated ministry. Many of the greatest and most reverent scientists of our race have been members of the Anglican Communion. Rural life, coming under the stimulus of scientific thought, needs for her help in meeting this problem, what our Church has always

been blessed with—trained leadership—a trained ministry. Are we ready to respond with our best?

A qualitative analysis of rural religion in the United States

In Chapter III, there was a quantitative statement in regard to religion in the rural districts—so many thousands, so many millions, in touch with no Christian Church. What of the kind of religious teaching and conception of its practice that is present with those who are classed as Church members?

We approach the question with humility; for, to our Christian brethren in other religious bodies, is largely due the fact that the country people of the United States possess what knowledge of the Gospel they have. As we look to see wherein these others have partly failed, we must not forget that their task is one which the Episcopal Church has only faintly tried.

In speaking to a group of rural Episcopal clergymen at the University of Wisconsin Summer School, in 1925, Dr. E. de S. Brunner said that he had never seen his field workers so depressed about the spiritual life of the rural people as they were when they last came in from the field. These field workers were men and women specially prepared by training and experience to evaluate rural conditions as they moved in and out of the homes of country people all over the land. They reported that never had they seen intolerance so widespread, ignorance so vindictive, or charity so forgotten.

This condition is still largely endemic, but manifests itself in such ways as contests between healing and

anti-healing groups in the West, and in the bitterness between Klan and anti-Klan factions, and fundamentalists and modernists almost everywhere. Communities are found where the Klan has split local congregations, with the result that there is, for example, a Klan Baptist Church and an anti-Klan Baptist Church in the one town. And those who know of the religious ignorance and consequent prejudice which characterize so much of rural thought will realize that it was Tennessee's misfortune rather than her uniqueness that made Dayton the scene of the contest between the fundamentalist and the scientific-minded groups in the summer of 1925.

Perhaps less than any religious body has the Episcopal Church been disturbed by these controversies. And surely there is a reason. It is not only that we have a better educated people and clergy, but also that, in the fullness of our heritage of Christian teaching, differences of opinion about secondary matters may be passed over in the face of a larger loyalty to the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. If this possession has been so great a help to our Church, can we withhold it from our fellow-citizens who so sorely need its benediction?

The people of the countryside today need our Lord's teaching of the grace of good manners and tolerance; of love, even to those who disagree with us. Also, someone must amplify again what is now only a faint echo: "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God with all thy mind." Is the message too unfamiliar or the task so great that our Church should turn aside from it!

Provincialism and a Church Universal

"Last year, when I had to take my granddaughter to the hospital, was the first time in 41 years that I had spent a night away from home." So ran a passage in a letter received a few days ago. It is characteristic of much of the forced restraint and isolation that yet marks a great deal of rural life in this country.

This stay-at-home story is but the outward sign of a mind and spirit within, upon which are imposed the same sort of restraints. There are thousands of rural homes where the daily papers and the better magazines do not come; thousands more where the radio is an unheard miracle. No wonder that provincialism of body, mind, and spirit rests like a blight on so many rural communities! No wonder that they mistrust new ideas for local improvement, new people that come into the community, anything, indeed, new and untried! No wonder that the same stories are told and retold until they come to have the prestige of traditions, and finally are accepted as true! No wonder that opinions and ideals which are already accepted by the world at large, and are moulding humanity's progress, are distrusted by these folk who know so little of them!

In any statement of this kind, however, it must be remembered that no generalization can be made that will suit all rural people. We have suggested that the educated ministry of the Episcopal Church should feel a special duty to the educated farming class who now are so often ministered to by men who have lacked the opportunities for academic and scientific training. That, however, is not true of all rural people. Many of them are poorly educated and restricted in their

opportunities to mix with the world, and so they have become provincial in body, mind, and spirit. To people in such a case, the religion that comes easiest to them is that of emotionalism, of proof texts, of shibboleths. This is not the kind of religious experience that will help them very much. They need something that will enlarge their outlook on life, increase their sympathies for their fellowmen everywhere, and learn to know better and to worship more whole-heartedly a God of love.

Not in any monopoly that our Church may have of a true Gospel or an effective ministry will be found her special fitness to deal with this situation, but rather in the possession of those things which are the common property of so great a part of the Church Universal.

First, a World-wide Outlook

We speak in terms of the Church's program for work at home and abroad. Every mission, every vestry, every individual, has a conscious responsibility in this program if the clergy of the Church do their duty. If they do not, then their people will be provincials, whether it be in city or country. In the city, they dignify this affliction by the term parochialism, but it has no place in the Church's teachings. She leads her children to acknowledge that the world is their field. If they follow her teachings, they become citizens of the greater commonwealth of the Kingdom of God. They learn that with the Greek and Roman communions as well as with the Protestant, they share a common purpose and follow much a common practice. They become conscious of a heritage of Christian

tradition that enriches their whole concept of the Church. As members of the Holy Catholic Church, their mental and spiritual experience is immeasurably enriched.

Secondly, the Prayer Book, and the Christian Year

All of us need direction and enrichment in our devotions. The true spirit of worship is not easily induced; the best verbal expression of that spirit is not quickly framed. No one would do away with the freshness and spontaneity of extempore prayer, in its proper place. No one, it may be imagined, would insist on Prayer Book services when their use would hinder, rather than help, the spirit of reverence and worship. The dignity and beauty of those services, even when rendered in the simple setting of a country mission, lift up our hearts unto God.

As the use of the Prayer Book gives us a reverent form of service, so the Christian Year provides a surety for a presenting of the full Gospel. It is not left to the minister's likes and dislikes. A mind wiser than any single intelligence lays the plan and sets the emphasis. The writer recalls an occasion of an all-day service at an old colonial Episcopal Church when a member of another communion, who often was present at our services, persuaded some of his friends to attend, assuring them that "they would have a let-up on Prohibition sermons and hear the Gospel once more."

Not long since the Director of Rural work of the Congregational Church remarked that the Episcopal Church had a great advantage in its rural work in having a liturgical form of service. "For," said he, "when a vacancy occurs, a layman can go right ahead with

the services; while with us, when the pastor leaves, everything stops until a new one is secured." It is unfortunate that lay people often do not realize the possibility of this.

*Thirdly, the Educational and Social-Service Emphasis
of the Episcopal Church*

There are some religious bodies in the United States that do not believe in Church schools; others that emphasize but lightly social and community responsibilities; but it is impossible for any Episcopal congregation to be true to the Church's teaching without being keenly alive to both of these things. Of course, we are not the only Christian body that does emphasize these duties, nor do all parishes in our Church practice them. Still, in the country districts, where Christian education and Christian social action are so sorely needed, the Church has a wonderful opportunity to exercise this part of her message.

We realize that these things, a catholic outlook, our Prayer Book and Christian Year, our program for Christian education and social service, are not the essentials of the Christian faith or ends in themselves; but they do furnish us with instruments of service that are marvelously, perhaps divinely, adapted for use in bringing people everywhere to a fuller understanding of the Christian faith, and in putting them to ways of practicing it.

SOME DIFFICULTIES WHICH OUR CHURCH FACES IN
HER RURAL WORK

A whole volume could be written on this one subject. It would include chapters on the lack of vision

of certain leaders in the Church in regard to this matter; on the self-satisfaction of others; on the laziness of almost all concerned. Those cases where apostolic zeal is shown in prosecuting this difficult work stand out conspicuously, but lonely. It is still so much a matter of not recognizing the responsibility.

These difficulties are found wherever the Church is slothful, in city or country, at home or abroad. In the rural work, however, there will be some distinctive difficulties even when the problem is approached with a resolute spirit and adequate means.

In many places, we will find the field already strongly occupied by other Christian bodies. In other places, there will be, as far as our Church is concerned, ignorance, indifference, prejudice, or open hostility. There is a case on record where the Klan burned a cross before the local Episcopal Church, since there was no Roman Church at hand, and ours furnished the nearest thing to it that these "100 per cent Americans" could find.

We must not fool ourselves by thinking that the people of the rural districts are stretching out eager, needy hands to the Episcopal Church. In most cases, we will have to persuade them of their need before they will accept our services.

It is almost impossible to overemphasize the ignorance of the majority of rural people in regard to the Episcopal Church. In one section of the Allegheny Mountains, some of our Church workers noticed that the natives spoke of our Church as the "Pistopal" Church, and, though corrected, they stuck to the name. On being asked why they used this term, they replied that their local preacher had told them that "those

fellows carry pistols, that's why it is called the Pistopal Church." They further were taught that the missionaries had sinister motives in sending the young mountain boys and girls away to boarding schools.

These native Americans, whose ancestors a few generations ago knew no Church other than the Church of England, have, in the last two or three hundred years, become alienated from, and too often forgotten by, their mother Church. To give them back what was once theirs is our duty, our opportunity.

RURAL WORK AS A MISSIONARY PROBLEM

So great is the task, so many the difficulties which face us in this work, that the only spirit which will carry us through to a worthy accomplishment of this work is the missionary spirit of our Master.

We cannot, now knowing the facts, comfort ourselves with the delusion that other Christian bodies are adequately serving the country people of the United States. We know that such is not the case; other religious bodies know it, and they are eager to have us share with them this great missionary task. Of course, as patriots, we want to save our rural civilization that the country folk may be a bulwark of safety; but patriotism, alone, will not hold us to this difficult task till it is done. It must be a passion for the souls of men, like unto Christ's. Any other motive would be as unworthy as it would prove insufficient.

CHAPTER VI

SUCCESSFUL RURAL PARISHES

PERHAPS the tone of this book thus far has been something less than encouraging. We are facing a tremendous task. The Church's efforts to meet it heretofore have not been commensurate either with her ability or with the opportunity. We should feel humble.

But not discouraged, for there are many parishes in the Episcopal Church where splendid work is being accomplished under rural conditions. The two remaining chapters are given to accounts of rural work that actually is being done. The methods here suggested may not suit other parishes, laboring under other conditions; but surely one sees running through all of these stories, the essential thing—a devotion to the task in hand; a recognition of its importance; a zeal to do this bit of the Lord's work, even though it be hard.

The accounts of work related below have come from many sources. It has seemed best to give them in the language of those who have done the work, rather than to try to edit them into an unreal similarity of style. Because of the busy lives of these sincere workers, there will be evidences both of humility and haste in their writings. So much the better, for thus they portray more accurately the true spirit of "doers of the Word" who are about the King's business.

CALVARY PARISH, TARBORO, NORTH CAROLINA

The Rev. B. E. Brown, Rector

(The following account is taken largely from a report of an address delivered by Mr. Brown at the

Third National Conference of Rural Clergy, held at Madison, Wisconsin, in 1925.)

Sixteen years ago, I became rector of Calvary Church, Tarboro, North Carolina. I went there because it promised opportunities for me to put into practice ideas I had regarding the Church's duty to country people.

The town was of about 4,500 population, and our Church numbered about 250 communicants, a rather large congregation for us in a place of that size. Outside of town there were two country mission Sunday Schools. The people of towns and country were of good old colonial stock. I suppose that, with scarcely a dozen exceptions, the forefathers of every white man in the county came from England in the Eighteenth Century, and belonged to the Church of England. In the very nature of things, our Church ought not to be alien to people such as these, however far they may have grown away from it.

Within the past sixteen years there have been nearly 900 confirmations and 1,200 baptisms. Of these confirmed, 60 have died, 22 have left the Church and joined various other religious organizations, and 235 have moved away, leaving 543 of them still recorded as confirmed members of the parish. Nine chapels have been built in this period at distances varying from two to fifteen miles from town. Nine Sunday Schools are taught every week in the parish, and, besides these, fifteen regular weekly services are held. During the year 1924, there were 460 sessions of Sunday Schools, 472 week-day services, 378 Sunday services, 110 public celebrations of the Holy Communion and 12 private

celebrations, 98 confirmations, 120 baptisms and 504 sermons were preached.

The work at these missions has been done by devoted laymen and laywomen, who went out faithfully week by week to their Sunday Schools, through heat and cold, dust and mud, rain and shine. I visit them as my time permits.

Let me give you some details of my experience that may be of some practical value:

1. How to found a country mission: Find some place within reasonable radius of town, where there is no church or Sunday School within four or five miles. Perhaps there will be some family of our Church in the neighborhood; but, if not, there is sure to be a family well disposed to your proposition, whatever may be their religious connection. Propose beginning a Sunday School for the benefit of the small children of the vicinity. Many will welcome the idea. It may begin in a room in a dwelling-house, or an out-house, or in the local schoolhouse. Secure a man for superintendent and two or three women for teachers. If rector and teachers will now really work, lovingly and faithfully, with trust in Christ for His blessing, this should be the beginning of a work that grows in a few years into a live country mission with a chapel and parish house; twenty, thirty, fifty baptisms and confirmations to its credit, and a fertile feeder, year by year, to your congregation in town.

2. Never enter a field already well served by some other Church, and never try to make members of other Churches dissatisfied with their Church, with the hope of getting them into ours. Such action will inject into the situation an element of rivalry, bitterness, hatred,

that should never be associated with the Name and Cause of Christ our Lord.

3. Be evangelical and sacramental, Low and High, get whatever is good from every source whatever. Be "High, Low, Jack and the Game."

4. Make use of every agency within your reach. Let the health department hold clinics in your buildings, the "Co-ops" hold meetings. Have pageants and plays and picnics. Get a portable moving-picture projector and use it. I have a contraption that fastens to the running-board of a Ford car, and running with the left rear wheel jacked up, produces a 120-volt current sufficient to furnish light and power in country places where there is no town current. There are an infinite number of Biblical and religious moving pictures to be had at reasonable prices. Get Holy Cross monks and Methodist evangelists to preach missions for you. Do not use the full liturgy of the Church, or any of it, when the occasion does not warrant it. Let your chief object always be the bringing of souls to Christ in Holy Baptism and Confirmation, and do not insist on too great a measure of intellectual preparation for these Sacraments.

5. The clergy should really work. I preach and hold fourteen regular services a week, year in and year out, and many occasional services besides. There is no reason why a healthy clergyman should not work from ten to twelve hours a day, all the year round, just like other honest workingmen. A man, however, who works all the time needs some kind of hobby to keep from going stale. Mine is gardening and photography. I get up early and work my garden and raise enough vegetables for my own use, and more besides. I have

a Graflex camera and a stereoscopic camera and an enlarging camera, and take hundreds of pictures of plays and pageants and Sunday Schools and Boy Scout Troops, and develop them myself and give pictures as prizes, and make lantern slides and exhibit them; and it pays both in diversion for myself and instruction and interest for other people. It is a fascinating and profitable hobby, as all hobbies ought to be. I am very fond of chess, the king of all games, and used to devote an evening a week to it; but the only man in the community who could play with me moved away, and I had to quit, which was well, as there was no profit in it—profit, I mean, in the way of helping my work.

6. It is good to take part in such movements of a community nature as you have any sort of gift for, provided you do not exaggerate the usefulness of it, or waste time in it. I am a Mason, and chairman of the Red Cross, and a director of the hospital, and Chaplain of the American Legion Post, and a Kiwanian; but I subordinate all these things to direct spiritual duties.

7. How must one preach to country people? Use the simplest Anglo-Saxon English. The average farmer has only about 300 words in his vocabulary. Do not use literary or theological English; use colloquial language. The most cultured understand that, while the least cultured cannot understand any other. Hazy ideas, highbrow style of sermons, orations you consider deep merely because they are obscure, are foolish and useless for such people. This is not because a country man is less intelligent than a city man, but because he is more intelligent. He has thought out for himself most moral and religious problems, and he sees through

bunk and persiflage, and cares nothing for it. Anybody can interest a city audience with any sort of sermon because they are accustomed to have others think for them. But the best hope for interesting a country audience is to do your very level best to present good old truths in a clear, concise, and, so far as you can, original way. Make our Lord's sermons your model. He preached to country people, and they "heard Him gladly"; and He never uttered a word or composed a sentence beyond the understanding of a twelve-year-old child; yet He sounded the depths of heaven and hell, and made plain the profoundest truths of God and the human soul.

ST. ALBAN'S MISSION, CIMARRON, KANSAS,
DISTRICT OF SALINA

By the Ven. J. M. Johnson

The scene is laid on the plains of southwest Kansas, where thirteen mission stations are scattered over an area of 2,500 square miles. It took some planning and burning of much gasoline on the part of the Archdeacon to give every one of eight missions a service every Sunday. The people were so happy just to have their Church services that they never dreamed of doing anything more than just to keep the Church alive. They hoped that some time a lot of Church people might move in or the Bishop be able to give them a resident priest, then they would grow.

The Archdeacon called a meeting of all the missions. Some men and women drove 125 miles to come. There were almost 100 present. As one man put it, "I did not know there were so many Episcopalians in all the

world." They began to realize that they were a part of the whole Church, and that the Church was trusting them to grow as well as to keep alive. The Archdeaconry meeting adopted two objectives for the whole field: "A service in every mission every Sunday" and "Add one new priest each year." Then they went back home to work. They organized telephone chains and personal follow-up work. The Archdeacon gave a series of confirmation instructions, disguised as sermons, at the regular services. Attendance doubled at the services, because the people were really working to interest their friends who had no Church home.

At first, in every single mission, the people said, "Everyone belongs somewhere; there is no one we can interest." Then a little comparison between the number of people who went to church somewhere on Sunday and the size of the population would start our people to work with their pencils. In one little town of 600 people, a dentist and his wife found sixteen adults who said they would like to know about the Episcopal Church.

However, we found it hard to sustain interest with the instructions only once a month. The atmosphere of Church services did not help them to listen to the instructions with an open mind, and they would miss an instruction now and then, perhaps the very one that would have met their difficulties. In spite of the increased congregations, but few adults were confirmed.

Then the Archdeacon discovered three communicants in a new field—Cimarron, Kansas, a town of 700 people. A young physician, one of the three, invited 17 of his fellow business men to meet the Archdeacon at dinner in the hotel. In an after-dinner talk,

he gave an outline of the teaching of the Episcopal Church, about which none of these men had known anything. It was not easy to talk to them. There was no Church atmosphere to gain apparent respect for the speaker. The men took him at his word, when he told them that he wanted a chance to try to "sell religion to them," and that if they gave him a hearing, they would be under no more obligation to accept what he said than if he were an insurance agent trying to sell a policy.

Around the dinner table there was no restraint. The men were open to conviction, and, with no women present to make them hesitate, they talked freely. The Archdeacon gave a straight man-to-man talk. They listened for over an hour to a straightforward outline of what the Church teaches. At the end, they voted unanimously to ask the Archdeacon to come for a series of six after-dinner talks.

The attendance at the dinners averaged fourteen men. Interest grew with each meeting, which were held fortnightly. If any one was forced to miss an instruction, it was made up to him in private. After two months, when the men were really interested, afternoon classes were organized for their wives. These were really tea-table talks, just as informal as the men's dinner-talks.

In three months, the first service was held. The vestments were explained as they were put on in the view of the people. Each page and paragraph in the Prayer Book was announced as the service progressed, since only two or three had ever seen a Church service.

The Archdeacon had some misgivings about their kneeling. So he told them that until they were used

to it, they could kneel by bowing in their seats, as some church "hunchers" do. The positive thump of thirty pairs of knees on the floor rebuked his timidity. The Creed (they had never said it before) rang out like a football yell. They believed.

The Bishop came and confirmed twelve adults. Eighteen more pledged themselves to be confirmed as soon as the instruction of their wives should be completed. Our one big mistake was in starting the class for women so late. One lawyer who had pledged himself to be confirmed called up the day the Bishop came and said, "I have been talking it over with my wife. She thinks I should wait until the children and herself can be instructed to be confirmed with me."

They rented a church, installed an altar and other Church furniture. They subscribed enough to enable the Bishop to give them a resident priest, and the Finance Committee began to look around for lots on which to build a church and parish house. Choir and Church School were organized. Ten men were admitted to the Brotherhood of St. Andrew, and began an earnest contest with the Woman's Auxiliary to see who could bring the most people to the church—all this in a mission six months old in a town of 700, with people to whom the Church was absolutely new.

They would not stop. They invited the men of the neighboring missions to a Sunday service and picnic dinner. At the dinner, plans were made to organize a Rural Church Club, with the men in each mission as a local branch. The whole purpose of the Club is to help win men to the Church.

This experience encouraged other missions to adopt similar methods. Already the growth in the Archdea-

conry had permitted the Bishop to add two new priests, justifying the Archdeaconry slogan, "Add one new priest each year." Then the men in another mission, worshipping in an upper room downtown, had organized a Chapter of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew with twelve adult members, and the Brotherhood men undertook to maintain services every Sunday by acting as lay readers. The new priests had made it possible to plan for a service in the other missions at least every other Sunday. Thus the Archdeaconry saw its second objective in sight.

One man who had received one very long private instruction went out to enlist a dozen men to take after-dinner talks and be confirmed with him. Five missions organized similar groups for the Fall Campaign of "After-dinner Confirmation Instructions." It was determined to double the communicant list of the Archdeaconry. Then the Archdeacon was obliged to leave the field, and the people are waiting for their new leader to carry out their plans.

At least they have proved, out there in Kansas, that the Church can win non-Church people in rural communities, if we have the courage of our convictions. Do not hesitate to abandon conventional methods. Carry the message to the man in the street in any way that will reach him.

THE WORK OF THE REV. G. B. GILBERT,
MIDDLETOWN, CONNECTICUT

There are few clergymen in the Church who are laboring with more success, and in a more difficult field, than Mr. Gilbert. The following is taken partly from one of his own accounts and partly from one of

the monthly articles he contributes to the *Rural New-Yorker* under the name of the "Pastoral Parson." Some of the methods employed by Mr. Gilbert may seem unusual. Few seminaries prepare men to fix pumps or to milk. Still, in the hands of this man, everything he can do becomes a means of serving these people. One great beauty of so much of his service is its naturalness. It would not be easy to imitate successfully much that he so effectively accomplishes. In the midst of a very busy ministry, he writes as follows:

Schoolhouse Work

"I believe very strongly in schoolhouse work. I have seven schoolhouses in my area and attended six schoolhouse Christmas trees this year. I pave the way by visiting the school and telling stories to the children; then I follow on another day with my stereopticon lantern (condensed gas light) and full equipment of slides—Bible slides (I have about 300), hymn slides, Psalm slides, yes, and funny slides. A great deal is made of singing from the screen, and sets of slides on the life of Christ and the parables. At Christmas time, I use "The Other Wise Man" with five or six additional slides on the Nativity, with good effect. It is astonishing how much of the Bible can be taught this way. Hurlburt's *Story of the Bible* is left on the desk for the teacher to read mornings, and is almost invariably used. Hymnals will be furnished any school that will use them also. Two-yard strips of heavy dark green denim are carried as part of the equipment to thumb-tack over the windows. To get everything ready in a schoolhouse takes from five to seven minutes. The noon hour is a grand time for this in the country

schools. Where it is done after school, generally a can of cocoa and a few loaves of bread are brought along, with tin cups, as children are always hungry after school. A few "all-hots" to broil in the fire will not tend to drive them home. To hear a back-district school, without any book or slide, but wholly from memory, sing with bowed heads and fine feeling each verse of "Jesus, tender Shepherd, hear me," is really an inspiration. Their lives cannot help being different. Church papers and reading matter are always left at the school visited. Both teacher and children are always urging more frequent visits.

Special Days

"Special Days in the country church are like sticks of dynamite in the ground—they loosen the soil for further cultivation. It gives people an excuse for coming the first time; and then, having come and tasted and seen for themselves, they keep coming. Christmas is one of them. Our best Church Christmas in the back-country this year was on the following Sunday—the Christmas service, the Christmas Communion, then the Christmas dinner together, then the children's Christmas, the singing, the tree, and the presents.

"As we have our Church Family Christmas, so we have our Church Family Thanksgiving—on the Sunday after Thanksgiving; our beautiful Thanksgiving service in the morning; and then our Thanksgiving dinner together. Short Sunday School sessions are held while the ladies get the dinner ready. Of course, all the children have been to service, anyway. If, in any large Lonely Road family, the dinner on Thanksgiving Day was not what some others had, it is made up for at

the Church Thanksgiving with fine family spirit and good cheer thrown in.

"On Harvest Sunday, in September, the county Farm Bureau Agent and the county Woman Worker are with us all day. The church is trimmed with corn in each corner—the golden ears husked and hanging in full view on the stalk. Other vegetables of all kinds are brought to the church. After the service and 'boiled dish' dinner, the Woman Worker meets with the women and the Agent with the men to talk over this year's results and next year's plans. Thus might the Church said to be 'married' to the soil with a courtship going on all the year.

"Old Home Day is also a wonderful day in all our churches and missions. The postcard sent out to invite old-time members has upon it the pictures of those who came last year. These services are not just reminiscent feasts, but have come to be real, evangelical and inspirational gatherings. In the back-country churches, everyone brings his own lunch and there are morning and afternoon services. At one church last summer, late comers at the afternoon service could not even obtain standing room.

"I must also mention our memorial service, near Decoration Day. After the service and dinner together, we all march to the cemetery and decorate the graves of both soldiers and all departed friends we know, and the children have exercises. In our Church service, we mention the names of those who have been taken from the neighborhood, and have prayers for their peaceful rest, as we do also at the All Saints' season.

"The whole atmosphere in and about the church in the country must be happy and cheerful, for country

life is drab at best and people long for that which eases the heavy burdens and drives away dull care.

"I always carry a bat and large, soft indoor baseball with me during the summer, and throw this out for both boys and girls to play with until time for service. I plan to have a rocking chair in each church for a mother to rock her baby to sleep in, and a carriage in which to place it when it is asleep.

Getting Close to the People

"One day, as I was passing the house of a farmer who had never attended his church, I saw a girl in the yard carrying a pail of water toward the kitchen. When I inquired why she did not use the house pump she replied that it was out of order and had been out of order ever since the house was built. I then made an investigation. The next day I drove up with the necessary parts and repaired the pump.

"This family did not believe in churches, and for a good while would not let the children go. Now they are my very best family in that section. I soon got to staying with them all night. With six children on a stony farm, most anything came in handy. Sitting by the stove one cold winter night, I mused to myself how I had brought that stove more than thirty miles, where it was given me by a man who no longer needed it in his garage. The man put on a big coat to go to the barn—I had brought him the coat. The girl put on a warm coat to collect some eggs—I had brought her the coat. The woman was churning—it was a churn Mrs. Gilbert no longer used. The boy went to get me a drink of water—I had given them the pump. It made me feel sort of at home.

"One time I was staying all night at a farmhouse and the man had not yet gotten home from a long, wet trip to town. 'Get the milk pail,' said I to the little boy. Together we went to the barn and did up all the chores and the milking. Thus the farmer on reaching home had only to put up his horse and come and sit down to supper with all nine at the table.

"One cold night just at dark, I saw a boy sawing wood alone under an open shed by a farmhouse far down on the Lonely Road. I stopped and went round and took hold of the other end of the saw, and together we finished up the pile. The saw was dull and the woman gave me permission to take it with me, and during church the next day I got a man to file it and I left it on the way back. Fifteen years later that boy, now a painter over in the city, came out with brushes and pails and two or three men, and was a wonderful help, without money and without price, in painting up the church where the minister preached who helped him saw that wood that night and where the man was filing away at the saw while the minister was preaching."

The following paragraphs are from the *Rural New-Yorker*, for which paper Mr. Gilbert, the "Pastoral Parson," writes regularly:

Men in Church. Some time ago, the Parson wrote how he was going to see whether or not one could get men to come to church in the ordinary village. While speaking about it at a church meeting, the treasurer remarked that the Parson mustn't expect too much, as there had not been any men attending church there, to speak of, for forty years. Yet one of the women called the Parson's attention to the fact, the other day,

that there were eight men in church that morning. We have a fine lot of boys coming, too. There must have been about fourteen boys and young fellows Sunday night. Half of the time we have service morning and half in the evening. We have been having some "whole-family" suppers with just a collection. At one we had clam chowder, and at the last we had oysters. The next will be a baked-bean supper. These are managed by the men entirely. They do every bit of the work and the boys wait on the tables. They choose a head waiter from among their number just to look after things. These boys have a lunch first, and then eat again after the others are done; any boy who couldn't dispose of two suppers ought to have a doctor. The Parson announced in church that the boys had kindly agreed to attend to whatever food might be left over. Then, too, we borrowed some vestments of a church that does not use them, and six or seven of the boys are now in the choir. After evening service, we go into the parish room and have cocoa and crackers and play games and any older ones visit who wish. Does your minister, Sunday School superintendent or teacher of the boys' class take the boys down round the furnace for a bite after service, and make the church seem like a home to them?

Never Mind the Cold. Say, but it was bitter cold the Sunday after Christmas—the day on which we were to have our Christmas tree down at the old church. It was easily six below, and the old Ford froze up and steamed like a locomotive. You have to stop and let her run standing with a blanket held tight up to the radiator to thaw her out. The roads were terribly rutty that morning, too. As we approached the

old church in that biting cold, the sexton, whom the Parson had picked up on the way, remarked that there "would not be over a million there." Well, sir, just before we began church, he edged around and remarked that "there wasn't a million there, but it looked as though there were half a million." And it was a sight. One family had come three miles, drawing two little children on a sled, one of them crying with the cold. Another family the Parson had never seen came from beyond this family. What a roaring fire we built! The Parson had twelve quarts of cocoa and five loaves of bread for a starter. After the service, as it was impossible to seat everybody at the tables, we passed round cocoa and bread and cake to the children and younger folks, who, with all their presents, were quite content, and the older folks sat with overcoats on at the table out in the dining room.

WORK IN BOISE COUNTY, IDAHO

By the Very Rev. Paul Roberts

A few miles north of Boise, Idaho, lies a large county called Boise County. It is large in territory but small in population. This was not always so, for many years ago it was one of the most active mining regions in the country. At one time it had a population of at least 30,000 persons, and it is a conservative estimate to say that more than two hundred million dollars' worth of gold was taken out of it. However, the easily secured surface gold was soon exhausted and the people moved away to other places, leaving forlorn towns that still show marks of an active and exciting past.

There are still mines being worked and lumber being cut. The population has dwindled and there perhaps are not more than 2,000 persons in the whole county, living in small towns, lumber and mining camps.

For many years there has been no resident minister of any denomination in the entire county, services being held only by traveling evangelists and ministers going in for occasional work.

Last year, through the Idaho Home Missions Council, the county was allocated to the Episcopal Church. The Presbyterian State Sunday School worker had established several Sunday Schools, which he turned over to the Episcopal clergyman, the Rev. I. Q. Wood, who was sent by the Church to take charge. There has been a splendid spirit of coöperation shown by all the church groups. We have a church building in Placerville, where the missionary lives and from which center he goes out to the other little communities and to the mining camps, truly a minister of God to all these people.

There has been no friction of any sort, and all the religious groups have kept to the letter their bargain with us. With a letter signed by the different religious bodies of the State, Mr. Wood can go to all the people in the county, no matter what their religious affiliation, and have their interest and support. He is trying to make his work as truly catholic in its nature as possible, not reducing to the lowest common denominator in order to satisfy everybody, but making his work fit the needs of all people.

This experiment is particularly vital in a State like Idaho, which has a large rural population scattered in the valleys and through the hills. Probably half the

population of Idaho are entirely out of reach of any church group whatever.

MISSIONARY WORK IN AN EASTERN DIOCESE

By the Missionary

The people of this mountainous neighborhood (which must be anonymous), formerly worked in the iron mines, or burned charcoal. The mines have been closed for twenty-five years and the people now do casual day labor, cut wood, farm small patches of rocky ground, and keep summer boarders. There are a few families of skilled carpenters and masons who find work within a radius of twenty miles. Steep hills and bad roads have helped to isolate them. Their isolation has fostered intermarriage, ignorance, prejudice and backward social, moral, physical, intellectual, mental and religious conditions. A number of persons cannot read and write. Almost all, even the poorest, own automobiles.

Most of these people claim to be Methodists, but have not been baptized or joined the Methodist Church. "We bury to the Methodists," may be their only connection with that denomination. Some are "Perfectionists," who, having had a religious experience, believe they are now saved and cannot sin.

Lack of wholesome recreation and social life have helped to make bad moral conditions, both in the village and mountains. There is a good deal of drinking and gambling.

People in isolated districts seem to be subject to mental disorders. These cases require a great deal of time. As an example: A man and a woman, both

subnormal and each married to someone else, have been living together for eleven years. The man will not stick to any job. He has fits of rage. One day he smashed the cook stove. Later he drove the woman out and burned up her clothes. They live away back in the hills, impossible to reach by automobile. They have a boy nine years old. He is so shy that it is impossible to get him to speak, and this and frequent absences have kept him in the first grade at school. Have not yet succeeded in getting him to Sunday School. Have worked with the Township Attendance Officer as well as independently on this case.

There is a great deal of tuberculosis. The national average is one percent of the population; the proportion in this county is much greater. Almost all the people are improperly nourished, and in some of the country schools 60 percent of the pupils are physically below par. This condition, together with unsanitary homes, is favorable to the spread of the disease.

The foregoing conditions indicate the need of a great deal of social case work.

Religious Work. Religious work is intensely pastoral. Because of the nature of the country and of the people, it is never possible to have large congregations. The missionary goes by automobile or on foot, visiting, winning confidence, instructing, trying to lead people to the Sacraments and the Christian life.

Holy Communion is celebrated at 8 o'clock every Sunday morning. The few village people who are communicants come to make their communions. The Sacrament is reserved, and week-day celebrations held whenever possible. Confessions are heard before all the great Feasts and in individual ministrations.

Sunday School meets at 9:30 in a union chapel two and one-half miles away. It is intended to bring the Church School up to diocesan standards in all respects. The school is graded into three classes. Normal enrollment does not exceed twenty pupils.

In our religious training a great deal of hand work is used. A teachers' training class has been conducted by my wife, who also organized the Church School Service League which includes the whole school and has met on Friday afternoons. Pupils who were behind in their hand work made it up at that time. They packed a Thanksgiving basket for one of the hospitals in the county and a Christmas box for a mission in the Virginia mountains and otherwise worked in the Five Fields of Service. The girls received sewing lessons and the boys did wood working, making simple toys. There was a story hour, and cocoa and crackers were served.

The Social Worker organized the Little Helpers and visited their homes, and in a number of cases got the parents to bring the children to Baptism.

A Nativity play was given at Christmas before an audience of seventy-five persons. Some of the children are so shy that it has taken months to get them to speak, even in answer to questions in their Church School classes. They are now taking part with the others, learning and reciting their lessons and catechism.

At the beginning of the Sunday Eucharist in cold weather a pot is put on the stove in the church. When the service is over there is hot coffee or cocoa for everyone. Someone always brings rolls or buns. We sit down and eat together before going out into the

cold and then, while some fold up the altar, the rest wash and dry the dishes. No charge is made, but those who wish, and have not given materials, may contribute not more than five cents. This custom makes it possible for the people to make their communions fasting at a late Mass without undue hardship.

Cottage meetings are held in various places during Advent and Lent. They are impracticable during the worst weather and during the summer. The service consists of short prayers, Scripture lesson, a talk on some subject related to home life, and hymns—about a dozen of them. The people like to sing, and make their own selections after we have practiced those we are preparing for Christmas or Easter. No vestments are used at these services. After the religious part, there is a social hour and refreshments are served by the hostess.

My wife has interested five village Churchwomen in the Woman's Auxiliary, and takes them in her car to the meetings in a town nine miles away. Our numbers are still too small to have an independent Branch, so we have joined the nearby Branch. There is value in thus uniting the activities of various small parishes or missions.

Every effort is made to help the Church people realize their membership in the Church at large, wherever they may find it. Missionary instruction is given in the Sunday School and sometimes at Mass, and the people contribute \$50.00 a year to the Nation-Wide Campaign, in addition to Advent and Lenten offerings.

Socials. It is planned to hold a big community social every month. For example, last November, men,

women, and children came to the church one afternoon. The women sewed for a Christmas box. The men cut wood for the winter's supply and the children stacked it up under the porch. At dark, some went home to do their night work, and came back. Others stayed through, and at six all sat down to supper served by the women on the Church School tables. After supper more people came, and there was a program of music and recitations. Speaking pieces is a favorite mode of entertainment; and all who will, take part. There were even volunteers from the audience, and they were given a place on the program. Attendance sixty; forty at supper.

A house has been rented for \$10 a month near one church, and it has been fitted up as a community center. It will be almost, if not entirely, self-supporting, any deficit being made up from the church collections. Socials in Hopewell House are of a more boisterous nature than is possible in the church building. Young and old play simple games with great gusto, and we have such dances as the Virginia Reel and Old Dan Tucker. Other activities at Hopewell House will be mentioned below.

Township Fire Department. Some form of organization for social purposes was needed in the village. A fire department was organized, and I was elected chief. This gave me an organization of thirty men between the ages of 21 and 35. Soon some of the older men asked to be admitted, and they were made associate members. The membership includes men from the village and surrounding country, and the department is a township affair. A woman's auxiliary to the Fire Department was organized.

These organizations affect the social life of the village and township. For instance, dances had been discontinued in the community because of the drunkenness and disorder connected with them. The fire department gave an old-fashioned dance, lancers, quadrilles, etc. Two hundred persons came. The woman's auxiliary served a cafeteria supper. Everyone had a good time, and there was not a sign of disorder or discourtesy. We made a hundred dollars. This was so encouraging that we signed a contract for six-thousand dollars and bought a Child triple-combination, two-tank, 400 gallon pump, hose car, and chemical truck mounted on a Larrabee chassis with a thousand feet of hose. Then everybody got busy to raise money to pay for it. It was the excuse of all sorts of socials and dances, plays, lectures, suppers and tag days.

Coöperating Agencies. In addition to the lectures mentioned above given by friends, there are many organizations such as museums, library commissions, etc., which may be called upon to lend lectures with slides. I purchased a lantern which can be used either with acetylene or 32-volt Delco circuit, and each time it is used I keep back a small percentage of the proceeds to replace its cost in my discretionary fund.

There are many agencies in the State which are eager to coöperate with the rural pastor or social worker, or which he can use to meet conditions arising in his work. The Extension Service of the State College of Agriculture, through its Home Demonstration Agents and local leaders, conducts classes in millinery, pattern drafting and dress making, foods and

ménus, baby-care, prenatal and later, foot comfort through proper shoes and exercises, and kindred subjects. Most country women have tired, lame feet through wearing ill-fitting mail-order shoes. Through the coöperation of the County Demonstration Agent, we are enabled to have these classes held in Hopewell House, and we are able to bring together groups of girls and women who could not be reached by the Extension Service unaided.

The Extension Service institutes or community meetings held annually throughout the county, are of great educational value. We were able to have such a meeting held, with good attendance. The program consisted of music, short addresses on various aspects of the Extension program, and a moving picture showing conditions and results of bovine tuberculosis.

Singing. Country people like to sing. Our Social Worker got some other women to help organize and train the village children to sing. They went through the streets on Christmas eve singing carols and taking a collection for the Red Cross relief work in Japan.

Later a group of young people was gathered in our house, and met every two weeks until warm weather. They formed the Village Chorus, with an enrollment of over fifty. The Chorus sang at half a dozen public gatherings during the spring, and some of the members sang hymns through the village streets early on Easter morning, the communicants in this group then coming into the Oratory to make their Easter communions at the first Mass. A great many boys and men belonged. Refreshments arranged by the members

themselves are served at each meeting, and the evening closes at 10 o'clock so the high-school pupils can go to bed early.

Library. Through the coöperation of the State Library Commission and private individuals we have opened a library of 500 volumes in Hopewell House. There is a good circulation, and the number of books is being increased. The Library Commission sends out loans of 50 books which may be returned for another box of fifty. It gave us outright a number of books withdrawn from circulation which were still good enough for considerable use. A special collection of books on child feeding, care, and training; and instructions for expectant mothers, was placed in our house and circulated among those interested. About a dozen babies were born in the village or nearby this spring.

Preventive Child Hygiene Nurse. My wife began correspondence with the Bureau of Child Hygiene of the State Board of Health, and we were called upon by the District Supervisor of Child Hygiene, after which I had an interview with the director of the Bureau. He was so impressed by the need in our township, that he offered the free services of a nurse for two years, twice the usual period, with the running expenses of an automobile. The only conditions were that the township and the neighboring borough provide a car, and that the local Township Committee and Board of Education make a request for the nurse's services. It is hoped that, after an educational experiment of two years, the work will commend itself to all the people and be continued at public expense. The Town Committee and School Board were

dubious about it, fearing it was a scheme to increase taxes. The township was then divided into districts, and a leading woman named as captain of each district. These captains got women's signatures to petitions to the Town Committee and School Board, to whom it was carefully explained that they were not placing the township under any obligation, financial or otherwise, and the desired action was obtained.

We are planning, with the approval of the District Supervisor, to have a child hygiene clinic in Hopewell House.

Tuberculosis League. The Tuberculosis League has this year put a nurse in our county, and this nurse is handling cases referred to her by the Mission. The Mission, in turn, looks up families and individuals referred to it by this and other organizations. There are two tuberculosis clinics in the county. It is hoped that a third may be opened in Hopewell House.

Red Cross. The Civilian Relief Committee of the County Red Cross helps cases referred to it by the Mission, and the Red Cross and the Tuberculosis League coöperate through the Mission.

Insane. The State Hospital for the insane, 25 miles away, has no out-patient department, but has given the services of its best psychiatrists to patients taken to the hospital for observation and treatment but not committed to the institution. This service is entirely outside the official scope of the hospital's work, and is obtained solely through the generous interest of the superintendent and the members of his staff. It is typical of the ready coöperation that

the Mission receives from all agencies to which it appeals.

Local physicians and hospitals are always ready to coöperate, as is also the School-Attendance Officer of the township.

State Children's Home Society. This society was on the point of breaking up a family and placing the children in homes because the father was too lazy to support them. Through the missionary's intervention the family was kept intact, and the father supplied with a job and encouraged to keep at it until the family's finances were in good shape. The man reported his earnings each week to the missionary, and his report was checked up by interviews with his employers. He has worked fairly steadily ever since.

Relation of Social to Religious Work. Time and effort given to social work have had their effect in bringing people voluntarily to the Mission for instruction or ministrations. The number of baptisms thus far in 1924 exceeds that of any previous year. The number of confirmations this year is equal to that of the largest previous year when little social work was being done. Requests for ministrations to the sick and dying and for marriages and burials have increased. The more we minister to the social needs of the community, the greater the influence and opportunity becomes.

Some day, possibly, some Diocese will tackle its rural problem, using as thoroughgoing a plan as this one, the following developed through the agency of the Congregational Home Missionary Society.

THE AROOSTOOK, MAINE, LARGER PARISH PLAN: AN
EXPERIMENT IN HOME MISSIONS

By the Rev. Malcolm Dana, D.D., Director of the
Rural Work Department of the Congrega-
tional Home Missionary Society

The Aroostook Larger Parish is located within the far-famed potato belt, but it belongs to the newer part of the county. It is 35 miles long and 10 miles wide at its widest point. It is also part of Maine's frontier which is not like the frontier of the level prairie States but is rolling country broken by mountains, lakes, and rivers, and covered with dense forests. All the farms have been cut out of these forests. Oxbow is the "end of the road"—over seventy miles from there to the Canadian border, and one-hundred miles of unbroken forest to the first settlement in New Brunswick. The people are farmers, lumbermen, guides, and are Protestants with the exception of half the population of Portage which is French Catholic brought there by the lumber mill.

There are four church buildings located at the centers of population. Though none of these buildings was erected with the "larger parish" method of work in mind, they serve the purpose for the time-being; but the pressing need is for better equipment.

There are unique features about this work: all three workers live at the center, which is Ashland, and each man is made responsible for the whole field; but each man is also responsible for one feature of the work. There is a Pastor-Evangelist, a Religious Educational Director, and a Social Director. The workers meet in

conference one half-day each week. All policies of any department are decided in this conference, and there is created a spirit of fellowship and devotion which could not otherwise be attained.

Schedules of work for each day are prepared and are faithfully carried out. They cover hours for study, pastoral visitation, services, for worship, social functions including moving pictures, boy and girl scouts, winter and summer sports, daily vacation Bible schools, and numerous other activities which arise from time to time.

The department of Pastor-Evangelism conducts, each year, a house to house canvass which is wonderfully successful in interesting the people in the church services. Each school is visited by one of the workers every Sunday and religious services are held. On a given Sunday, twenty services were held in fifteen different centers beginning at 8:00 A. M.

The Social Director not only stages a series of entertainments, socials, etc., but also furnishes regular moving pictures in five out of six towns served by the larger parish. The outfit consists of a moving picture machine, a stereopticon, a Ford car, and a twelve-passenger Ford truck. There are two other Ford cars, personally owned by two of the staff.

The Religious Education Director has his dozen or more schools working under a perfect system which would do credit to any city school. Daily Vacation Bible Schools are a great success in the Larger Parish.

Do the men work long hours? Call on them, ride the circuit with them and find out. To reach home at midnight or later than that, is so common an experience that no notice is taken of it.

Is the experiment being tried out in this demonstration parish proving successful? It certainly is. It has gone beyond the experimental period. Many, but not all, of the "rough edges" have been worn down. Some of the outlying districts are not yet quite reconciled to having the three ministers live in the one village. The men think it is necessary for the success of the plan, and it is winning its way with the people.

Three bad years for the Aroostook farmers have made the financial side of things very discouraging, but as we go to press the whole district is making the most thoroughgoing Every Member Canvass yet tried by any one of the churches. So far as word comes each church is going to surpass its former best efforts. People who never contributed before are doing so this year, and some very generous pledges are reported. The testimony of one man, prominent in his village, is worthy of record here: "I do not believe there is a devil; I do not believe in a hereafter, and I hardly believe there is a God. I don't care anything about a resident minister. But I do think the Church is a good institution to have in the community, and I think that the Larger Parish is getting at this thing in just the right way." The conclusion of this man is that reached by a lot of people who have seen the plan at work.

CHAPTER VII

PLANS FOR RURAL WORK

THE COUNTY ASSOCIATE MISSION

By the Rev. S. W. Hale of Belmont, N. Y.

“THE story of the rural work in the Diocese of Western New York is one of ups and downs. It has depended largely for its success on the personality and self-sacrifice of its clergy. The Associate Mission has one great advantage in its favor, namely, that the Diocese is behind a group of men who are trying to bear each other’s burdens and solve them; whereas before, the individual was left in disheartening isolation. It must be borne in mind, however, that there is no desire to claim that the fundamental problem of mission work is in any degree changed because a group method with solid financial backing has taken the place of individual effort or Archdeaconry visitation. *We are aiming at the same goal as before*, i.e., to supplement the efforts of parishes and missions too small to carry the whole burden, in such a way that the placing of the diocesan strength behind them will aid, and not retard them in becoming self-supporting units in the Diocese.” (From a report of the Executive Secretary, Department of Missions.)

The Associate Mission plan, as worked out in Allegany County of Western New York, under Bishop Brent, means the association of a group of small parishes and missions under one head. Upon nomination of the Bishop, the respective vestries elect one priest as rector of all associate parishes. This rector is also

in charge of adjacent missions. He chooses his own assistants, determines their place of residence and the division of the pastoral work, and has general oversight.

Although the separate identity of each parish and mission is maintained, the financial resources are, in effect, pooled. What is lacking locally toward a living wage in salaries and automobile upkeep, is supplemented by the diocesan Department of Missions. The Department furnishes each priest or worker with a Ford Sedan, but each parish and mission includes in its budget an item for automobile replacement so that the field itself replaces its cars systematically.

As at present constituted, the Allegany County Associate Mission consists of four parishes, three missions, and groups of communicants in five other towns, besides scattered rural families. The rector lives at Belmont, the geographical center; another priest is in residence at Wellsville at one end of the field, while a third priest lives at Cuba at the other end. Each priest thus lives at the center of the sphere of work for which he is personally responsible as pastor. All parishes, missions, or groups of communicants, are within a radius of twenty miles and connected by paved State roads, and most of them are within ten miles of the priest-in-charge.

Regular Sunday services, (as well as Church schools and parish activities) are maintained in all the parishes and missions, the number or frequency depending on the relative importance of the church. Staff meetings are held monthly at Belmont, preceded by a Eucharist and followed by breakfast, conference,

and discussion of common problems. Where practicable and possible with the limited staff and almost unlimited field, cottage services are held in towns of a few communicants having no organized mission. During the summer months, when the roads permit, the highways and byways of the scattered and isolated rural families are reached by house to house visitation. (This aspect of the work has been admirably developed in the Wyoming County Associate Mission under the Rev. C. R. Allison.)

At this writing, the Allegany Associate Mission has been in operation for about five years—long enough, perhaps, to determine some of the advantages of the plan.

In the first place, let it be remembered that the history of the small-town parish of the Episcopal Church has been one of long-suffering and pathetic neglect. To illustrate by what is undoubtedly a typical example: here is a town of approximately one-thousand people; an actual, concrete case. During the thirty years preceding the organization of the Allegany County Associate Mission, this parish had eleven rectors and two *locum tenens*. One rectorship lasted seven years and another five, but the other nine rectors stayed, on the average, *less than two years*. The same story is true, substantially, of all four parishes. Again, there were intervals between rectorships when the sheep were entirely without a shepherd; or, at best, with only monthly visitations by an overworked Arch-deacon. The results of such irregular ministrations, on the life and devotion of a congregation, its Church School, and other organizations, need not be dwelt upon. They are well-known.

But that is past history in Allegany County. Since the inception of the Associate Mission, every parish and mission has had regular services every Sunday in the year—with the exception of a few services omitted on account of blizzards.

There are not wanting evidences of renewed life as a result of regular ministrations and pastoral leadership—large confirmation classes, increased church attendance, and increased giving (in one case practically to the point of self-support).

One factor not to be overlooked is the clergy themselves. It was a Bishop who said that, in the past, more often than not, the only clergyman available for the small-town parish was the superannuated, the misfit, or the young deacon fresh from the seminary and sent by his Bishop; and who will blame the young deacon for leaving at the first opportunity, when his salary was not a living wage? Under the Associate Mission plan, it is another story. The clergy are paid enough to live on. They are in this rural work because they *want* to be. They do not look on their jobs as temporary stepping stones to a city job. Moreover, they are not individuals left “in disheartening isolation,” but associated together in a real fellowship of common purpose, and backed by the whole Diocese—the Bishops, the Executive Council, the Department of Missions and Church Extension, and last but not least, the people of the Diocese whose financial help makes the work possible.

A RURAL CONVOCATION

There are Rural Convocations aplenty in the Episcopal Church, but this plan of the one developed first

in the Diocese of Mississippi, and now being adopted in other Dioceses, is unique in many ways, and has proven extremely valuable.

Its membership is composed of all rural and small town clergy in the Diocese. There are two other Convocations in the Diocese, the Northern and the Southern Convocations which take in all the clergy in the upper and lower ends of the Diocese respectively. The Rural Convocation draws its members out of the whole group because of their vocation as rural clergymen, and not because of their place of residence. Thus all the rural clergy of the Diocese are members of the Rural Convocation and also of one or the other of the territorial Convocations.

The following statement by the Rev. V. H. Sessions of Bolton, Mississippi, Dean of the Rural Convocation of that Diocese, gives the purposes and plans of this organization.

The Purposes of the Rural Convocation in the Diocese of Mississippi

1. To study the best methods of carrying the Church into rural districts.
2. To study subjects such as rural sociology, community surveys, county extension work, etc., in a general way. This is done, not that the clergy may be expert farmers, but to find out how we can best co-operate with farmers in their work.
3. To build up a closer personal touch and better feeling amongst the rural clergy, so that they will not feel isolated in their work.
4. To give to those engaged in rural work an opportunity to express their views and to talk about their

particular problems, an opportunity that otherwise would be denied them in the average Church gathering.

5. To make all Church people, rural and city alike, realize the greatness of the task, so that the clergymen in the country will not feel that they are just marking time, and city brethren will not look down on those engaged in country work.

6. To have a rural program for a rural people.

The Plans of the Rural Convocation.

1. To meet once a year.

2. To work out a feasible program for the rural parish.

3. To bring in to the meetings of Convocation at least one expert each year to talk to the men on such subjects as those suggested above.

4. To try to develop, as an ideal, the building of a chapel once every two or three years in places in the Diocese where the work needs strengthening.

5. To use every endeavor to keep the men happy in their work.

LAY WORK IN THE DIOCESE OF VIRGINIA

By the Rev. G. M. Brydon

The action establishing headquarters for the Diocese of Virginia was taken in 1919 at the meeting of the Diocesan Council which approved and undertook the Nation-Wide Campaign. The work of that campaign showed the possibility of securing, in Richmond, a number of laymen who would go out to hold services in vacant parishes. During the conduct of the Fall Campaign, as many as twenty-five speakers, most

of them lay readers, went out on one Sunday from their home churches in Richmond to vacant churches in other parts of the Diocese, to speak on the work of the Nation-Wide Campaign. It was comparatively easy, after the Fall Campaign was over, to select from this group of laymen a number who were willing to continue going from Sunday to Sunday to vacant churches.

Virginia is to a very large extent a rural Diocese, and the rural parishes have a harder time securing ministers and holding them than any other type of parish. There are perhaps sixty rural cures in the Diocese; and, as a rule, from ten to fifteen percent or more of them are vacant all of the time. The diocesan authorities formulated a plan to keep up the services in all vacant parishes in the Diocese by sending out students from the Virginia Seminary and lay readers from other centers in the Diocese. This plan has been wonderfully successful and is still being kept up.

The City of Richmond, like perhaps other cities, has drawn a great many people from the rural counties adjacent to it. This consistent drain has, with the passage of years, weakened the Church in the counties near Richmond more than in the other sections of the Diocese; so that when the Nation-Wide Campaign began, there were perhaps more vacant parishes and more abandoned churches within a distance of forty miles of Richmond than in any other similar section of the Diocese.

It was proposed to the Church in Richmond that, as the city had grown strong on the very life-blood of the country, it should return to the country something

of what it had received. There were, at that time, about four abandoned churches where services had been dispensed with for several years, and two vacant parishes. The lay readers were sent out two by two, one to read the service, the other to make an address. We found, from the first, that sermons read from a book were not helpful, and the lay readers were authorized by the Bishop to make addresses of their own. After these lay readers had gained experience, the teams were separated, and one new man put with each experienced man.

The effort has been, from the first, not to continue services indefinitely, but to build up the organization of the congregation or parish itself, and to keep things going until a resident rector could be secured. In this way, the four vacant churches were opened, and three of them have since been incorporated into cures with a resident rector in charge. The remaining one is still ministered to by a lay reader. These lay readers have, whenever the opportunity occurred, prepared confirmation classes and presented them to the Bishop; the celebration of the Holy Communion being, of course, cared for by priests whose services were secured by the diocesan office. This group of lay readers has been instrumental also in establishing two missions at promising points within reach of the city, one of which has since grown into a self-supporting parish with a rector of its own.

It would be difficult to give a complete account of the number of services that have been held since the beginning of the work. In the year 1924, an average of nine services every Sunday was arranged for from the diocesan headquarters; but this included, besides

the work of lay readers, the services of clergymen who were secured from time to time, and also the emergency calls for a minister or lay reader to take a service which a rector of a parish was prevented from taking by sickness or other cause.

As the out-growth of the work of the diocesan staff of lay readers, one of the churches of Richmond, St. Paul's, has found work of the same kind for its own laymen. They have trained a group of five or six lay readers who can be called on to hold services. An assistant minister of St. Paul's has charge of three mission stations, and these lay readers go at the direction of the rector to these stations, and to hold services in a country church some thirty miles up the river.

Another church in Richmond, St. James', is at present undertaking the oversight of the Church's work in a county near Richmond which will require the services of several lay readers under the direction of the rector of St. James' parish.

Another piece of lay work which has been conducted from Richmond for many years, indeed the first work undertaken by laymen, is the work at the Boys' Reform School which was situated, until recently, about eight miles from Richmond, but has now been removed thirty miles up the river. For many years, the only regular religious services which this school could depend upon the year round, was the service conducted every Sunday morning by the lay readers of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew of Richmond. A group of five lay readers have kept up this work, one going each Sunday, and they still continue to do so.

A CHURCH ON WHEELS

By the Rev. W. J. Vincent

In the Diocese of Michigan, an experiment is being made, with pronounced success, to reach the isolated rural sections by means of a "Church on Wheels." This is a specially constructed chapel-van fitted on a truck chassis, and is modeled after the general plan of the chapel-cars of the Church Army in England.

The van is equipped with an altar and sacred vessels, a miniature stone font carved and given by the father of the first child baptized in the van, a portable organ, a victrola with Church hymn records, and a radio. The seats, which run lengthwise inside the van, are hinged, and serve the double purpose of seating small congregations for inside services, and beds for the missionaries. Beneath these seats is storage space for bedding and personal belongings. A wash-room and a cook-stove which also provides heat for the van as required, complete the equipment.

The van is so constructed that the rear step forms a preaching platform for open-air services, and powerful spotlights give sufficient illumination for evening services.

Starting out in the Spring, the van follows a definite itinerary, advance notice of its route being sent to the clergy in order to secure local coöperation where possible, although the van's biggest work, and that most needed, is in regions hitherto untouched by local Church ministrations.

Reaching a rural community—a village or small town—the missionary parks the van in some centrally conspicuous position to advertise its presence, and

proceeds to placard the community with posters announcing the time of services, with a radio concert to precede the service.

The interested group which usually gathers, is invited to inspect the van, and its purpose is explained. During the concert, service-leaflets are distributed. If possible, an organist is secured; failing which, the victrola is connected to the radio amplifier, and records provide music for the hymns on the service leaflet.

By arrangement with St. Paul's Cathedral, Detroit, the missionary receives advance notice of the hymns to be used at the Cathedral services broadcast by radio, so that by tuning in on Sundays, a rural congregation assembled at the van is enabled to join in with the Cathedral services.

Following each service, notice is given of a Communion Service to be held next morning, and it is surprising how many Episcopalians, isolated, neglected, but hungering for their Church, announce themselves and receive Communion, perhaps for the first time in many years. Arrangements are made to baptize the children of the community; leaflets and handbooks are distributed to those inquiring about the Church; and manuals for preparation for Confirmation are given to those who desire this Sacrament.

One feature of the van is the numerous side-trips which the missionary is called upon to make where people, aged or sick, send in a request that the missionary visit them. Where feasible, the scattered Episcopalians and prospective Episcopalians are put in touch with some clergyman; in every case definite arrangements are made for return visits, so that these Church people and others without spiritual ministra-

tions are made to feel that the Episcopal Church realizes and assumes its responsibility towards them.

Because of the vast area to be covered, the van usually makes only two visits to a community each season; but the results more than justify the expense and effort, in the number of lapsed members brought back to the Church, in the sacramental ministrations, and in the constructive work of organizing Church Schools and developing small congregations.

During the Winter and early Spring, when rural travel is not possible, the missionary, with the van, engages in another much-needed work in the industrial centers of the Diocese by conducting noon-day services during the lunch hour for the men of the factories. The novelty of this service is attractive; the van, so efficiently equipped, compels admiration, and the sane methods of the missionary and the simple beauty of the service, win respect for the van wherever it goes.

THE RURAL PRESS

"Who runs the Country?" This question appearing as the headline to an article in *The Review of Reviews* is answered by the author of the article, Mr. John H. Perry, as follows.

"The correct answer is *The Country Press*: The force that controls this country of ours is, in the long run, the rural editor, in his capacity as spokesman for sixty-million Americans who live and earn their living on the farms and in the villages and towns of 5,000 population or less."

A Woman's Auxiliary member writes to ask if we have ever thought of printing the Gospel for each Sun-

day in the weekly country newspaper, as a means of preparing to bring this world to Christ, and to give us all a working knowledge of the Kingdom of God.

An illustration:

Episcopal Services.

St. John's Church—Laurel.

Church School	9:30 a. m.
Adult Bible Class.....	10:00 a. m.
Holy Communion and Sermon...	11:00 a. m.
St. Mary's Church, Weyanoke...	2:30 p. m.
St. Paul's Mission, Laurel Hill...	4:00 p. m.
St. Andrew's Church, Clinton....	7:30 p. m.

The Gospel for the Seventh Sunday after Trinity—St. Mark VIII:1. "In those days the multitude being very great, and having nothing to eat, Jesus called His disciples unto Him," etc. (The whole of the Gospel for the Day is printed.)

While on the subject of the Rural Press, it is well to note that the social and religious agencies associated in the American Country Life Association issue monthly, except in July and August, a paper, *Rural America*, which is recommended most highly to all rural workers. The subscription price is \$2.00 a year, and subscriptions should be sent to Mr. Henry Israel, 1849 Grand Central Terminal Building, New York City. One Diocesan Social Service Commission used to have the paper sent to each of its rural clergy.

And we must not forget *The Rural Messenger* issued by the Rural Workers' Fellowship of the Episcopal Church. This Fellowship organized at the Second National Conference for Rural Clergy at Madison,

Wisconsin, in 1924, is composed of over one-hundred rural workers. Their purpose is threefold: to promote the work of the Church in the rural field; to increase the spirit of fellowship among rural workers; and to aid the National Council in its efforts to develop rural work. The dues of the Fellowship are \$1.00 a year, which includes a subscription to *The Rural Messenger*. Full information about the Fellowship and *The Messenger* may be obtained from the Rev. V. H. Sessions, Bolton, Mississippi.

RURAL MISSIONARY WORK

By the Rt. Rev. Herman Page, D.D.

In the District of Spokane and in the District of Idaho, of which I had charge for nearly a year, from 50 percent to 75 percent of the churches are what might be called rural, being in towns of three-thousand inhabitants or less. The condition of these churches was so weak that one often wondered how far he was justified in using missionary money to keep them open. Further investigation has convinced me that the same condition prevails in most sections of the country where the population of a rural or small town has become static, that is, where it receives no real increase through immigration. The question is then, "Is the Church's work in these communities justified?" To be justified, it should show either growth in the direction of self-support; or, if it cannot achieve self-support, it should do the sort of work that would be recognized as being of marked spiritual and social value.

So far as my study of this situation goes, it reveals that nearly all these churches that are in the doubt-

ful class are without Sunday Schools. I have found them without little children and without young people, and it is obvious that any institution that has not young life coming in is doomed to die. The older members of our churches move away or die. In any given community, especially a rural community, one can look for little growth from the older people trained in other Churches. Therefore it seems obvious that if, in any community, a church is to grow, it must look first for the children of its own people, secondly the children which one finds in almost any community who are not attached to any special church, and third for the parents and friends who will be confirmed with their children.

Granting that it is necessary to emphasize work with children if a church is either to grow or to do a significant work in rural communities, we are brought face to face with several inherent problems which are apparent in small churches. The first is the difficulty of finding people who are either willing or competent to assume leadership in our Church Schools. Our laymen and laywomen do not expect to conduct Sunday Schools or, to any large degree, to teach in them. They expect the clergyman to look after this work.

Another difficulty lies in the fact that there are so many clergymen who do not believe that the Church School is of primary importance; they are more interested in other things. In working out their programs, they are quite likely to put the Church School last, although of course they are always glad to have a School if somebody will conduct it for them. A Church School—especially a good modern Church School—requires a lot of time and effort on the part

of the clergyman, particularly in a small place. If he does not teach classes he must at least take time to train teachers.

Still another difficulty lies in the fact that our lay people, as a class, are not yet sufficiently impressed with the importance of work for children. There are multitudes of vestries and mission committees that never have any contact with the work of the Church School. Therefore they have no interest in it. When it comes to making a budget, there is no item for Church School work; they are not interested in providing necessary equipment. Even the good women frequently get very much excited if the paint is soiled, or a chair or a bit of crockery is broken by some husky boys whom the clergyman is trying to lead into the church.

The inevitable conclusion to which I am driven is that if the churches in small places are to grow, work for children and youth must be emphasized above all things else. The clergyman must look on it as his most important task. Members of the Vestry or Mission Committee and members of the Women's Guilds must be made to realize that if the work with children is not done all their other efforts are of no avail.

As I write, I think of a beautiful stone church in the Diocese of Michigan. It has a pipe organ; it has a beautiful, light basement, well equipped. The Guild has all things necessary to do good work—sewing machines, careful equipment, nice china; in a well-appointed closet hang all the vestments for a choir. But two years ago this church was practically dead; the services were intermittent; there was no one to wear the choir vestments; and if there had been a

choir there would have been literally only a handful of persons to lead in worship. This fine building with all its equipment was more of a monument than a living church. In a thriving community, our older people looked after everything except the children, and within a few years the inevitable crisis came. About a year ago a Sunday School was started. It was not very large, but it has kept growing, and within a year it more than doubled in numbers. Last summer we held a vacation school there which ministered to all the children of the community. Thus we not only are developing our own organization but we are making a spiritual contribution to the life of that town. The future is bright even if it takes ten years to put that church again on its feet.

It has been noted that the chief problem in handling Church Schools, especially where there is no resident clergyman, is lack of lay leadership. If it was difficult to get this ten years ago, it would seem all the more difficult to secure it now that we are trying to get the standards of our Church Schools equal to those of the day schools. The problem is to know how to secure the necessary leadership. The first obvious need is to secure a standard course of instruction. The greatest step ever made in one-hundred years in the work of Religious Education was the production by our General Board of Religious Education of a standard course, called Christian Nurture. While Christian Nurture is by no means perfect, it is an excellent course; but I believe its chief value lies in the fact that Churchmen of all classes have been able to unite on it as a standard; first, because it is good; and second, because it allows sufficient liberty of teaching.

In Spokane, and here so far as possible, I have insisted that my missionaries use Christian Nurture. The results have been notable. In the first place, the scholars are trained from year to year in the methods of the same system of instruction. If their parents move from town to town they continue their work in the new parish where they left off in the old. The same is true of the teachers. Anyone trained in Christian Nurture in one School can continue her leadership when she moves into a new Parish.

In many churches where it seems well-nigh impossible to find leaders and teachers for the Church School, one of the best sources of supply is found in boys and girls in the High Schools which are now to be found in nearly every community. If these young students have been trained in Christian Nurture they are already familiar with the technique, which is a great gain. One of my clergy had a 16 or 17 year old High School girl act as Superintendent of his Sunday School while he was away for two months. She took the Opening Service and handled the School admirably. He could not have found an older man or woman in the town to do it. This girl had been trained for a number of years in the Christian Nurture methods in the Church School, and had attended several Summer Conferences.

I cannot do better than tell in some detail the story of a Mission in the little town of Oroville in northern Washington near the Canadian Line. When the Rev. Mr. Severance went there as a missionary about twelve years ago, he found a handful of Church people, no Church School, and only two or three children in Church families. He was determined, however, to

have a Sunday School if he had nothing else, and gave it much personal attention. When Christian Nurture first appeared, he adapted it to the needs of his little School, introducing a course at a time, but especially seeing to it that the courses were being used by the younger children. The School grew gradually until, in the year 1919, there were nearly one-hundred children connected with the School, including the Cradle Roll. The active School had an enrollment of perhaps sixty. Presently I noticed quite a group of little girls eight or nine years old. Year by year they became more familiar with Christian Nurture methods and teaching. Presently these youngsters were in High School, rapidly developing powers of leadership. Certain of them were picked to attend Summer Schools and various Conferences. Then they began to teach. One girl acted as Superintendent. About a year ago I had a letter from a woman worker who is in charge of the School, in which she told me that, in addition to her teachers, she had a normal class of ten High School girls who were being trained in the five courses that were being taught in that School, which she said meant two substitute teachers in addition to the regular teacher for every course being taught. Yet six or seven years ago it had been practically impossible to find regular teachers for that School.

This brings me to the last means of solving the problem and perhaps the most important; and that is the more extended use of women workers for rural work. The clergymen cannot well supervise a Church School except in the town where he lives, and even there it is exceedingly difficult for him to give that

personal attention to little children which it is easy and natural for a woman to give.

Two years ago, I found a group of parishes in the northern part of the Diocese of Michigan that had no clergyman. In three of them, no Services were being held at all. In one town, we had a Church School of about twenty-five scholars. In the fall of 1924 a woman worker was sent into the field. Within a year and a half, she has been instrumental in getting together nearly 160 children in five different schools. Three of them meet in churches; one meets in a country school; and another meets in a Bank building which is not used because the Bank failed. This building is in a community that is little more than a cross-roads. In that field last year over fifty persons were presented for Confirmation. In one community, the Church School and the Church have developed rapidly, and the outlook in the whole field was never so good as at the present time. In another field further south, we have placed a woman worker who is getting equally good results. These women workers are under the direction of the Archdeacon and are following a carefully arranged plan.

It seems to be true that a Church School can be built up almost anywhere if there are children in the neighborhood. They afford the best material for the upbuilding of any community and of the Church. I know no way of reaching their elders so certain as through their children, and I am more and more convinced that there is no program that will so appeal to the older members of our congregations when they have once been brought to a realization of its importance and its effectiveness, as a program that looks to

the spiritual and moral education of little children and the youth of our communities. No places need this sort of help more than our rural communities.

THE RURAL CHURCH SCHOOL

By the Rev. J. W. Suter, Jr., Executive Secretary of
the Department of Religious Education

In a congregation where there are only fifteen or twenty children, or less, the problem of religious education, and particularly the problem of curriculum, is sometimes difficult. The following observations embody certain principles which may be helpful.

There are today on the market, the following courses, among which the average leader in a small congregation is likely to find one or two textbooks that are helpful:

The Christian Nurture Series

Morehouse Publishing Company, 1801 Fond du Lac
Avenue, Milwaukee.

The American Church Series

George W. Jacobs and Company, 1726 Chestnut
Street, Philadelphia.

The Six-Year Series

Charles Scribner's Sons, 597 Fifth Avenue, New
York.

The Completely Graded Series

Charles Scribner's Sons, 597 Fifth Avenue, New
York.

It must not be supposed that in the case of every congregation a school, or anything like a school, is necessarily the best instrument for religious education. In order to have what is really a school, in the generally accepted sense of the term, one needs to have different departments at least, and even different

grades with the possibility of promoting pupils. If the small number of children and their distribution as to ages, make this impossible, the fact might just as well be faced that a school is not possible. Nor should this circumstance be regarded as discouraging. A school in itself is by no means the only, and probably not the best, medium for imparting religion. In fact the situation may be described thus: that in a congregation where the number of children is sufficiently large, the process of religious education *has* to take the form of a school. There is no other way in which so many children can be handled.

Supposing, then, that we have a congregation in which there are about a dozen children. The best plan would be to meet these children in a single group every Sunday in a special service of worship. Presumably a certain number of grown people would be present with the children. By a careful selection of hymns, prayers, instructions, and stories, it is likely that during the course of a year the children would receive greater benefit in their religious lives than if they had been divided into very small classes, and each class presided over by an incompetent leader. It is true that in order to make the former plan succeed there must be one competent leader. Presumably, however, it is easier to find one than several; and in any congregation where not even one can be found, the situation is essentially almost hopeless, no matter what system is tried.

At present, particularly in the Episcopal Church, there is a conspicuous lack of suitable material in the way of simple guides for the leaders of such groups. We need a few very good books, which present to such

a leader certain minimum and essential ideas, and which will admit of enlargement and elaboration if these are desired. We also need simple manuals for home-study and self-teaching, especially in isolated homes. It is earnestly hoped by the Department of Religious Education that materials of this sort will before long be available.

THE CHURCH LEAGUE OF THE ISOLATED

By the Rev. R. C. TenBroeck, Sandusky, Michigan

Every rector has a long list of "lost" communicants due to the usual "pruning" of the parish list and the laying aside of those names that can neither be found nor traced. An estimate of the number of confirmed persons so lost runs into the hundreds of thousands. Every clergyman knows this familiar story. The problem has been to find the solution. The Church League of the Isolated offers a definite answer.

In 1917, there appeared in one of the Church weeklies, a letter to which the editor gave the title "The Cry of an Isolated Churchwoman." She described her loneliness and her longing, far from the services of her Church; and her efforts, single-handed, to devise some way of giving Church training to her small family. The letter evoked several replies from clergy interested in missionary work in widely scattered parts of the country. This common response to a common need drew the respondents together, and resulted shortly in the formation of a Society to which was given the above name. It was a very informal affair; no officer saw any other officer; the president lived in Minnesota; the secretary in Skyland, N. C.; the treasurer and editor in Nampa, Idaho.

At first the secretary tried to keep the list of all "the isolated" reported. But it soon became evident that this was too large a task to cover all the country, and would result in hampering the work. The present writer suggested that the Diocese or Rural Deanery was a more effective unit of work; and in a vigorous campaign in the summer of 1921, the appointment of diocesan secretaries by the diocesan authorities was secured in two-thirds of the Dioceses and Missionary Districts.

A very elementary program of the League was prepared in 1921 as follows:

1. To search out, and list, the "lost" communicants in every Diocese.

2. To impress upon the clergy the great need of recovering the large number of communicants lost through living in communities without the services of the Church.

3. To secure the appointment of a "live" clergyman or layman to push this phase of missionary work by calling it to the attention of the clergy, by keeping a list of the isolated communicants reported, by seeing that each is placed under the spiritual care of some accessible clergyman, and by reporting to the Bishops any such cases within their respective Dioceses.

4. To supply *The Isolated Churchman* and other literature, through either the national or diocesan organization as the Diocese may elect.

5. To work to galvanize each "isolated" into a center of activity for the Church.

Lack of funds has hampered the wider usefulness of the league; it has been largely a labor of love. But the work of the diocesan secretaries of the league, as

well as of many lay people, has resulted in the development of many successful methods which the national officers now wish to pass on to inquirers.

In one Diocese with missionary territory, the business instinct of the Executive Secretary has devised a large map. Upon this map, a dot or colored pin notes the home of every isolated family; and a double card catalogue gives other information, one part arranged alphabetically, the other by districts to facilitate personal calls.

Another Diocese offers to send out Prayer Books, Hymnals, and Bibles. More than one send out the missionary mite-boxes, with returns that would not compare unfavorably with many a regularly organized Church School. At least one sends out lesson-leaflets by mail each Friday—a “Postal Church School”; and asks for the return of these lessons with written answers which it marks and grades. In this “Postal Church School,” nearly one-hundred are enrolled. In another Diocese, nearly five-hundred families are enrolled in a list which is carefully kept up to date.

The work in South Dakota has been most successful and is in its sixth year. The secretary reports that most of the newer names have been received through letters from persons already on the list who send in the names of relatives, friends, or neighbors. The missionaries’ monthly reports to the Bishop have a blank space for any names of isolated families which they may have found or heard of. To each of these the secretary addresses a personal letter—a second, perhaps a third or fourth before a response is evoked. Some, however, are hungry for the Church and

respond gratefully. A Christmas card, an Easter or birthday card, makes an impression. From the penitentiary, came this reply, "I am lonely, but your kind words always cheer me, and your papers which I received. When I write to a Church worker, I can't help but think of my mother."

Among those in South Dakota, are elderly people who have lost their earlier friends and are without the capacity of cultivating new ones. A number of teachers who have gone out from larger parishes are on the lists of isolated; and occasionally some faithful Church of England communicants, wistful because their children cannot have the beautiful spiritual atmosphere of the old Church around them in their formative years. When death comes, the remembrance of the Church, even by letter, brightens the dark pathway to the Land beyond.

Some of South Dakota's isolated circulate their papers and letters among the group in which they live, and beyond.

Some live a hundred miles from any mission, some only twenty; but nearly all want to have their children baptized.

Some have an offering-box in which they drop their money when they are studying the weekly lesson. One year this brought in over \$24.00.

Many of the children have never seen a "Piscopal" Church, but are getting their religious training through the secretary. This secretary writes of her "cosmopolitan" congregation of scattered settlers: "I have State senators, judges, school superintendents, other teachers, doctors, lawyers, merchants, and if not chiefs, at least some grandsons of such."

That there is great call for such work is shown by the experience of one young man sent into a North Dakota town for a summer of Church work. Not a single communicant of the Church was known to reside there. His first inquiries for "Episcopalians" met with the reply, "There are none." Next he asked for English folk. He found the druggist who had been confirmed back in the old parish church. Then the town doctor proved to have been confirmed; and so, on and on, his success ran till he found forty-five Church people where none had been known, and baptized twenty-five in one summer in this small town. On the basis of this and other bits of experience, it was estimated that there were possibly ten-thousand "lost" Churchmen in the State.

Not a few cases are known where the finding of a missing communicant has resulted in the establishment of a Church School and a new Mission. Wherever the postal service goes, there may go the Church for a postage stamp—even into Cuba, and in one case, the South Sea Islands. Probably no field in the United States offers so large results at so small a cost of money and time.

The secretary of the Church League of the Isolated is the Rev. A. A. Hughes, Manheim, Pa.

VARIOUS CHURCH AGENCIES

Material for the following paragraphs dealing with certain Church agencies and their relation to rural work, was furnished through the courtesy of the national officers of these agencies.

It must be borne in mind that national officers do not have any easy formulæ that will solve local prob-

lems. The best that can be done is to give suggestive instances, in the hope that they may strike fire against the flint of hard problems in various localities, and some light be created thereby.

The Church Mission of Help

The Church Mission of Help did not begin its rural work in rural Dioceses ; for, in its earliest metropolitan branches, it came to know rural girls stranded in the great cities.

Often they had left home because they had not found excitement in the little places where they lived. Often they had tasted of the sordid excitement provided by the bad element in their community, and had run away because village gossip made it impossible for them to reinstate themselves.

These inexperienced country girls were found to be an easier prey to the evil influences of the large cities than girls who were the sophisticated product of city life. Always it had been necessary to trace their histories back into their villages and homes, for the Church Mission of Help is seldom able to be effective unless it understands all the facts of its girls' environment. When branches of the Society developed in Dioceses of sparser population, its country girls came to it in all the earlier stages of unrest and revolt ; and as the workers came to know them, they came to know also the communities, and to find that the communities had as much individuality as the girls themselves. The Church Mission of Help workers have learned many facts about the things in village life that influence the young, and have seen the working of these influences. It is remarkable how complete a survey

of a town a concrete instance of delinquency may supply.

The Church, the school, the judge, the sheriff, the poormaster, the country doctor, the county nurse, the dancehall, the movie, the corner store, the ice-cream parlor—they are like the features of faces, differing in every combination, and the children of the village respond to the expression of the village face. There is almost no limit to what a church may effect in a region where it gives itself to the service of the community by bringing home to the people there the findings of concrete experiences in social case work.

Case after case in the Church Mission of Help records, show what great temptations come to young people from the lack of being occupied; from the lack of recreation; from the fact that the small communities which have least to offer a young girl, are the soonest to show up her failures, because everything that occurs in a village is so easily observed and discussed.

This very closeness of observation may be turned to good account if the neighbors will think out the problems in terms of help and not of condemnation. The dance halls and movies and ice-cream parlors can, in good hands, offer clean recreation. The officials of a town can, in all their acts, reflect as well the interest, as the indifference, of the people of the town. It is for the Church to teach them to care.

In one village, through the coöperation of the Church, the problem of a girl united all the forces that could help. The worker found a county nurse who could be called in; there was a kind country doctor, a school superintendent, a children's court judge, and

the ministers of four other denominations. They all saw the community problems in a new light, and worked over them together because they had got, in one girl's story, a new view of the needs of girls and boys. The rector had brought them all together because he and the worker had a concrete instance in their hands. This is only one of many illustrations of the same kind.

The workers of the Church Mission of Help have not done their case work with their girls unless they have enlisted the rural church to do case work with the community.

The rural Church Mission of Help has the great advantage of having so many of the factors of its world in plain sight. It can, with its clear knowledge of facts, call upon the small band in its own church and, through it, the wider village group, to remove causes of trouble, and to strengthen sources of healing for the young and helpless whose need of care is very great.

The Secretary of the Church Mission of Help is Miss Christine Boylston, Room 301, 1133 Broadway, New York City.

The Girls' Friendly Society

By Miss Kathryn Merritt, Provincial Field Secretary

"The question of the rural work of the Church seems to be a very vital one. The Church's program should consider the question from all sides, and it has brought up some very real questions in my mind during the past year as to just how we are meeting the need of our rural girls. I believe that, as an organization, we are meeting it through the creative expres-

sion which we give to girls. I am thinking of two very rural Branches, one of which is twenty miles from a railroad; in the case of the other, the girls have to walk at least seven miles for a meeting.

"Today, as never before, we need to hold fast to the ideals of family and religion, and nowhere do we come across this emphasis so strongly as in rural districts. When girls come together in a meeting and can conduct it along family lines, or self-government, it gives them a sense of assurance. They feel, too, that they are taking their place in the world, for they realize that, through us, they are in touch with an international organization which has for its background a definite religion expressed through its program of education and recreation. It gives them a sense of belonging to the outside world.

"One of these Branches has become a community center, which of course spells recreation; it also means sympathy and understanding from an older woman. Through their own community work, they have aroused an interest in one of our girls' boarding schools, which has brought about such a bond as to make these girls feel that their life is worth while, although 'many miles from nowhere.' One of these girls was sent to a Diocesan Council meeting, it being her first trip on the train and down into a city. She read her report with a poise and an ease which would have compared favorably with any trained city girl. In other rural Branches, these girls, through their leader, have learned to use the gifts at hand that God has given them. They have also become interested in historic places nearby, so that each summer they borrow cars and go for a trip to such points of interest.

"In talking to a clergyman who asked me to take a trip through the mountains and start a G. F. S. in his mountain missions, I asked him why he chose this organization. His answer was:

" 'Because money is a secondary issue, and you are giving girls a stabilizing influence in building character because they feel they are united to girls all over the world. Your roots are centered in God; and you have given me an opening into homes, have brought about a friendly spirit in the neighborhood, and have enabled me to keep track of my girl when she goes away from home. If I had only had you twenty years ago, I would know today where certain of my girls are, instead of wondering if I had failed'."

The following is a synopsis of a year's work done by a Branch of the G.F. S. numbering five associates and thirty-five members. The parish is an open-country one, and meetings are generally held at the District High School building at recess time, or immediately after school hours:

Jan. 10th—Check to Hooker School, Mexico, \$5.00.

Mar. 12th—Lectures during Lent on Japan by President of Woman's Auxiliary.

Apr. 2nd—Japanese Tea follows lectures—silver offering \$3.00. This amount with \$7.00 realized from sale of candy during Lent, sent to Day Nursery at Kyoto, Japan.

May 10th—Maintained Rest Room at High School on Field Day. Girls took turns at staying in room to help mothers with their little children.

May 14th—Dance and social evening by the two larger groups.

May 16th—Contribution to Provincial Conference to be held in October.

June 8th—Seven girls attended Convocational Conference.

July 14th to 18th—Camp on river—33 girls and associates.
Camp self-supporting.

September—Box of candy to associate who was sick.

Box of "eats" to one of the members who had gone to the city to take up training as a trained nurse.

Box of "eats," funny papers, etc., to a little boy sent from the community to a tuberculosis sanatorium.

Nov. 7th—Play by oldest group—Proceeds \$65.00.

Nov. 13th—Visit from National and Provincial Secretaries: Miss Newbold and Miss Merritt. Report of year's work by girls. Talks by Miss Newbold and Miss Merritt, followed by games and refreshments.

Nov. 22nd—Check to National Center—\$10.00. Check to salary of Provincial Secretary—\$6.50.

Nov. 22-24—Two delegates sent to Provincial Conference and Diocesan Council. Expenses paid by Branch.

Nov. 30th—Two boxes of clothing to mountain Missions—value \$38.80.

December—Five Christmas stockings to poor family.

Box of candy, toilet articles, medicines, to patient at Trudeau, N. Y.

Box to mountain Mission Home by candidates.

Box to Tuberculosis Sanatorium.

All of these for Christmas.

The Girls have been taught:

1. The Rules and Motto of the G. F. S.
2. Missionary course on Japan and China.
3. The proper way to dance.
4. Something of etiquette.
5. At camp, during the summer of 1925, they had talks on the following subjects:
 - a. A Girl's Duty to God.
 - b. A Girl's Duty to Her Neighbor.
 - c. Citizenship.
 - d. Courtesy.
 - e. Personal Purity.

A Rural Chapter of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew

The homes of the fourteen men of All Faith's Chapter, Brotherhood of St. Andrew, Mechanicsville, Md., are widely scattered over the country-side. Only five receive their mail through the postoffice at Mechanicsville. The mail of the others comes via R. F. D. through the postoffices at Charlotte Hall, Duke, and Oraville. Most groups of men similarly situated would have decided that organized group-work was not possible. This faithful band, however, has decided otherwise.

Regular and well-attended Chapter meetings are maintained. A monthly Corporate Communion for all the confirmed men and boys has become a fixed and successful part of the parish program. Much quiet personal work is being done. Men are called upon in their homes, especially those who are sick. The people generally are greeted Sunday after Sunday at the door of the church, and particular attention shown to strangers. Quiet and continuous efforts to increase church attendance are maintained. Several members of the Chapter are also members of the Vestry.

Through his work in the Chapter, one of the young men has recently been led to study for Holy Orders.

And so this group of ordinary men living in a rural community, is doing a quiet effective work for the Church and maintaining some of the fine traditions of the Brotherhood.

The General Secretary of the Brotherhood of St. Andrew is Mr. G. Frank Shelby, 202 South Nineteenth Street, Philadelphia.

The Activities of the Church Periodical Club in Rural Work

Clergy, teachers and social workers in the rural field are provided with periodicals and books for their own use, to keep them in contact with the life and thought of the rest of the world and to enable them to do their work better. In a few Missionary Districts and rural Dioceses, circulating libraries for the clergy have been begun, including in some cases books on rural as well as theological subjects. A rural Arch-deacon was supplied with a few books to use in preparing a paper; to the stimulus of this reading, is due, in part, the fact that his Diocese is now among the foremost in constructive plans for rural work.

The classes of workers mentioned above are supplied with various tools for their work.

1. Religious material in the form of books and tracts to lend or give away.

2. Books and periodicals for community libraries.

A number of such libraries have been built up where room is available in parish house or mission house, and have proved of value in many ways. In one small parish, the rector used the library, of which the people are very proud, as a concrete example of the good accomplished by paying the quota. The share which the C. P. C. receives from the National Council enables it to make known to those who have books the need for them in other places. In places as widely separated as Virginia, Missouri and Wyoming, the local schools depend upon the mission library for outside reading. In one place, the teachers told the deaconess

that they could always tell which children belonged to the mission by their interest in books and their general information.

3. Periodicals and books of all kinds for distribution.

These are carried far and wide by the missionary and in many cases are an "open sesame" to the homes he visits. Quantities of similar material are distributed by lay people who are interested in their neighbors and are familiar with the source of supplies. Interesting results are reported, from time to time, of homes better cared for through such reading, and of the development of community effort. Some years ago, a man of no great amount of education but socially-minded, opened a store in a community noted throughout the county for lawlessness and the number of arrests made. The people had access to nothing but the poorest type of reading matter. With the help of the C. P. C., this man was able to keep on his counter an ample supply of decent literature open to everyone. He asked that books be returned, but magazines passed on to others. At the end of a year, he reported a marked change in the tone of the community, and that not a case had been brought to the courts for the three months past.

4. Pictures for school and Church School use, and for distribution in the homes.

5. Christmas and Easter cards.

These are used in various ways, distributed after Service or Church school, or mailed by the missionaries to isolated families and individuals under their care. A general missionary in the West reports warm appreciation on the part of those to whom his cards go.

At the request of the clergy, magazines and sometimes books are sent direct to families and individuals known to them. By such means, friendly relations are often established between sender and recipient, to their mutual benefit. Some years ago, a woman hindered by illness from active work for the Church began to send her copy of *The Spirit of Missions* to another woman living forty miles from a railroad and much farther from a church, who felt equally cut off from the opportunity to work for the Church. A correspondence sprang up between the two; the second woman began to gather a few children together for Church teaching, then the elders for a little service. When she died, a few years later, there were eighteen communicants in the place and money was being raised to build a church.

A recent development of rural effort is the provision of books for the libraries of rural schools, not mission schools. Requests for such assistance come, as a rule, from members of the Church—teachers or members of Church guilds interested in their own communities. It is usually possible to respond, in some degree, without neglecting our own Church Schools. The most notable instance of this effort is in a southern county whose five High Schools owe their libraries almost entirely to the C. P. C.

The Executive Secretary of the Church Periodical Club is Miss M. E. Thomas, 22 West 48th Street, New York.

THE WOMAN'S AUXILIARY AND RURAL WORK

By Laura F. Boyer

Assistant Educational Secretary of the Woman's
Auxiliary

Being an organization that works under the direction of a diocesan Board, the Woman's Auxiliary is peculiarly fitted for rural parishes, since neither its existence nor its work are altogether dependent on the presence of a rector.

In many instances, one faithful woman has gathered a little group of Auxiliary women around her, and they, in turn, have started a Sunday School, and in time a mission has been organized.

Where there are groups of missions working under one rector, the Woman's Auxiliary, by its regular meetings and work, often keeps up active Church life in each separate mission of the group. In other instances where there are rural parishes without rectors, the Woman's Auxiliary has held regular meetings, kept up the Sunday School, held Lenten services, and kept the parish together as a unit.

One such group has kept the Church alive in a little community on the plains of the Southwest. A woman who came over from England, to be with her brothers out on a ranch in the Panhandle, felt that even the rough, wild, lonely life would be bearable if she could hear once again the services of her Church. Her brothers had been deprived of their Church for twenty-five years. This little woman wrote to the Bishop of the Diocese, telling him of her great desire for a service, although there were only four Church people in

the neighborhood. The Bishop sent his Missionary Chaplain at the first opportunity. To quote the Chaplain's own words: "I shall never forget the ride from the depot to my host's home. Bleak, dark and cold the trip; but my host was a very pleasant companion and the team of horses in fine condition. Next morning, arrangements were made for the service. The people round about came in wagons and on horseback, and service was held in a room of the small house. I preached and celebrated the Holy Communion, and it was a most reverent and attentive congregation. In the afternoon, another service was held, and my host and hostess stepped forward to ask the Church's benediction on their marriage, which had been performed by the county judge some months before."

From this beginning, that little group held on until, seven years later, they built and consecrated a little church. The Bishop gave them help with the building, as did the community, and also friends in England. Now they have nineteen members who come from miles around, as far as thirty-five miles away, though they have only the fifth Sunday of the month for services, which means about four times a year. They have regular meetings of the Auxiliary; are eager to follow any suggestions of the National Church; have an Every Member Canvass; are organizing a Young People's Service League; and, though there are only two babies, have the "Little Helpers' Roll." Their great wish is that some day they can have services more regularly. In the meantime, the Woman's Auxiliary is holding the band together, and eventually their prayers will be answered. Their motto is, "Patience and perseverance conquer all difficulties."

Again, the Woman's Auxiliary, as an organization which, by its very nature, causes its members to look beyond narrow horizons, is particularly fitted for rural parishes and for women whose lives are so often forcibly self-centered. As these women work for supplies for mission stations, their horizon must necessarily become enlarged. They gain a realization of the needs in far-off places, and of the means by which even women living in isolated rural districts of the United States can touch the lives of the women and children of the Church in other lands.

The United Thank Offering is another means through which women of the Woman's Auxiliary everywhere may join in one great body. The Little Blue Box may represent to the isolated Church woman a very real contact with China, with Japan, with Africa, with South America, and the many dependencies of the United States. At the time of the United Thank Offering Service in New Orleans, countless groups of women far away in little rural missions, many of them without rectors, were meeting together in praise and prayer with a realization of that great service, having a real share in the Offering through their little blue boxes, and a real unity of spirit with all the other women who were sharers in that great gift to the Church. No physical barrier can separate those who are of the same spirit.

A very close contact with the needs of the world is gained when women in rural districts join with the other women of the Church in intercessory prayer. Literature for such prayer is sent into rural districts by diocesan Boards of the Woman's Auxiliary, and many isolated Churchwomen and women in rural par-

ishes and missions, joining their intercessions to those of the whole Church, lift up their eyes and look on the fields already white to harvest and pray that more laborers may be sent into the harvest. In some rural districts special devotional services are arranged for the Woman's Auxiliary. In one of the great Dioceses of the Southwest, the Churchwomen of the whole county, a widely scattered one with few churches, meet twice a year for a Corporate Communion in some place where there is a church and a rector. For some of the women, this is the only opportunity they have to receive the Holy Communion during the year. Without the Woman's Auxiliary they would have none.

The educational work of the Woman's Auxiliary is making a greater and greater appeal in rural districts. In most Dioceses, reading-lists of books on Missions are sent by mail to officers of rural Branches of the Woman's Auxiliary. These are followed, in some cases, by travelling libraries circulated by diocesan officers in rural districts. In some Dioceses, leaders under the direction of the diocesan Educational Secretary of the Woman's Auxiliary make circuits into rural districts conducting study classes in small places and trying to reach all women within a possible distance of that place whether connected with any parish or not. Some diocesan Educational Secretaries prepare papers in envelopes, with pictures, to circulate in rural districts. The papers are ready to read at meetings. Some Dioceses plan training classes in rural districts, aiming to bring at least one mission-study class a year within the reach of every woman. Some Dioceses put their rural educational work under the special care of one member of the diocesan educational committee.

Many diocesan Branches of the Woman's Auxiliary recognize the special needs of rural districts and make special plans to meet these needs. A very practical plan which has been widely adopted is to divide the Diocese into districts with special officers, grouping together parishes and missions which are within easy automobiling distance of each other. Thus it is made possible to find isolated Churchwomen and link them up with the Church's work, to distribute literature, to maintain a personal touch by correspondence, and to send notices of meetings. Under this plan, one-day meetings are arranged in central places once or twice a year, and are attended by practically all of the Auxiliary members of a given district. In some Dioceses and Missionary Districts where distances are great the district plan idea is carried out by neighborhood meetings, the women from the missions and the isolated women coming into the nearest parish for an all-day meeting, bringing a picnic lunch. In other places, the idea of the strong Branches being the "Big Sisters" to the weak Branches, proves helpful. In some Dioceses, teams of diocesan officers of the Woman's Auxiliary have made circuits through rural districts, visiting small Branches, holding conferences with the women, explaining the work of the Woman's Auxiliary and wherever possible, having a Corporate Communion with them.

Through such a diocesan organization much practical help is given to the small rural Branches of the Woman's Auxiliary which are struggling with their own special difficulties. Rural Branches that keep in touch with their diocesan officers of the Woman's Auxiliary are given all the help available. Their

names are listed on diocesan records, they receive helpful literature and notices of general meetings as well as special meetings planned for them, and at stated times they are visited by the diocesan officers. Plans for local Branches include prayer, study, and gifts of personal service, money or supplies. Many volunteers for the mission field have come from Branches of the Woman's Auxiliary in rural districts.

In 1922, in order to help develop the work of the Church in rural districts, the Woman's Auxiliary voted at its Triennial Meeting in Portland, Oregon, to ask for the appointment of three general field workers to be supported by the United Thank Offering, to work in any Diocese in the United States at the request of the Bishop. They are loaned to the Diocese for periods ranging from one to six months, and do such work as the Bishop desires them to do.

The following program for a rural Branch of the Woman's Auxiliary is the result of several years' experience on the part of a trained Church worker, in formulating a practical plan for Auxiliary work in a rural parish where, before, the main working body among the women had been the Ladies' Parish Guild. This Guild, while doing a splendid work locally, had absorbed the interest of the women of the parish. This program of the Auxiliary has been worked out so that its work and that of the Ladies' Parish Guild may not conflict. Thus, as often must be the case in country parishes, the same women can be members of both organizations without having to attend too many meetings.

The work of the Woman's Auxiliary in this parish is intensive. The Ladies' Guild holds no meetings

during Lent in order that all efforts may be concentrated on the Auxiliary. The rest of the year the parish work takes precedence, the Woman's Auxiliary holding only five meetings for specified purposes.

Mission Study covering the selected courses (in 1926, Latin-America) by an independent group outside of regular meetings. Difficulties of travel, weather, and distance, make it impractical for the Branch meetings to be limited to a course of study. Each meeting must hold its unit of interest, so that if a member fails to attend a meeting because creeks are too high to cross, roads too heavy with mud, or "the horses are being used on the farm," she will not feel out of step at the next. Information regarding the different mission points and *The General Church Program* is given by the members as part of each regular meeting, and this information they must gain by a study of the Church papers, *The Spirit of Missions*, etc.

Some of the members of this Branch live twelve miles apart; some are separated from each other by waterways and almost bottomless roads in bad seasons. There are thirty-four names on the roll and a good average attendance at each meeting.

The annual luncheon is not for the purpose of raising funds, but is a get-together meeting to which all the members are invited, to enjoy themselves and to hear the report of their delegate to the Annual Diocesan Conference.

Outline of Program

January—Opening service. Short informational program on some mission-point or project of the Church at large.

Business meeting. Election of officers. Plans for fund-raising. Tea served.

February and March—Entertainment for raising funds. Musicales, rummage sale, etc.

Weekly meetings held during Lent. A personal letter asking for coöperation is sent to every woman in the parish. Meetings are held in chapel.

An Easter box of new garments for some mission-point is planned for, articles or material donated, and made at home by members.

Program for Lenten Meetings

First meeting—Pledges. Short articles read by different members explaining each need, to which pledge is made. Box plans.

Second meeting—Pledges continued. Gold and silver offering discussed. Meeting of Messengers.

Third meeting—Birds'-eye view of Latin-America. Conducted by four members. Map used.

Fourth meeting—Preparation for U. T. O. Items of interest about Triennial offering. The corporate Gift Box plans. Gold and silver offering taken.

Fifth meeting—United Thank Offering. Communion Service and address.

Sixth meeting—Held in Parish House. Boxes packed. Delegate to Annual Diocesan Conference elected. Tea served informally.

Seventh meeting—Holy Week. Meeting held in Chapel. Inspirational service. Short readings and special intercession for woman's work in the Church.

April—No meeting. (Parish Guild work begins.)

May—No meeting. Delegate attends Annual Diocesan Conference.

June—Annual Luncheon. Delegate's report read. Conference Secretary will make short address urging attendance at nearest Summer School Conference, held in July.

July—No meeting. Members attend Summer School. (Parish Guild work going forward.)

August—No meeting.

September—United Thank Offering Service. Holy Communion and address.

October—Meeting to plan for Christmas box, and plans in the interest of Every Member Canvass.

November—Business meeting. Box packed. Plans for Every Member Canvass.

December—No meeting. (Parish work in full swing.)

* * * * *

We should not end this book merely with suggestions as to methods, but rather with a re-emphasis as to motive.

Why should a Christian Church seriously concern herself about the condition of religion in the rural districts? Because a great need is there—the need of our Nation for a Christian citizenry—the need of these citizens for Christ.

To carry the knowledge of Christ to those who know Him only in part should be the joy, as it is the duty, of our Church.

Let no one think that we are here pleading for a casual expression of interest out of the Church's superabundance of good will. Rather is it a call to focus our attention upon the very heart of a life.

We still derive our sustenance from the soil. With all our complicated machinery of life, we are still a rural-minded people. Our laws, our statutes, and our ordinances are in terms of the rural community whence our cities have sprung. Our cities recruit their population from the farm. In our mother tongue, the figure of speech that derives from the life in the country still predominates. The poets whose words and songs most quicken our heartbeats, are poets of coun-

try life. When we would speak to the people of things spiritual, today as on the shores of Galilee, we speak of scattered sheep having no shepherd, of seed and good ground, of homely rural realities. When we have ceased being rural we shall have ceased to be. These our brethren in the hills and plains and valleys are our economic basis, our source of vitality for leadership, our background of thought, and our co-workers in a common wealth. It is for us to make our wealth truly common, that we and they may share alike in all that we have and know, even as we work alike to a common end.

“If thou shalt hearken diligently unto the voice of the Lord thy God * * * blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field.” (Deut. 28:1 and 3.)

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COMMUNITY SERVICE HANDBOOK. Community Service, Inc.,
New York.

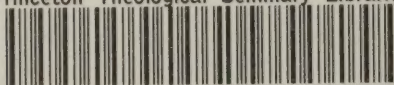
Community Music; Recreative Athletics; Fun for Every-
one; Rural and Small Community Recreation; 50
cents each.

Community Drama. 60 cents.

Copies of this book may be obtained from
The Book Store, Church Missions House, 281
Fourth Avenue, New York City. Price 60
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